

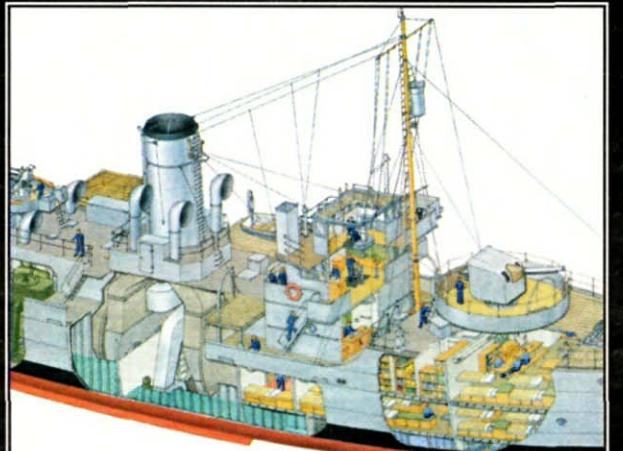
Navy News

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We are amused – p21



Flower class corvette cutaway inside



100 years of making music – p 19

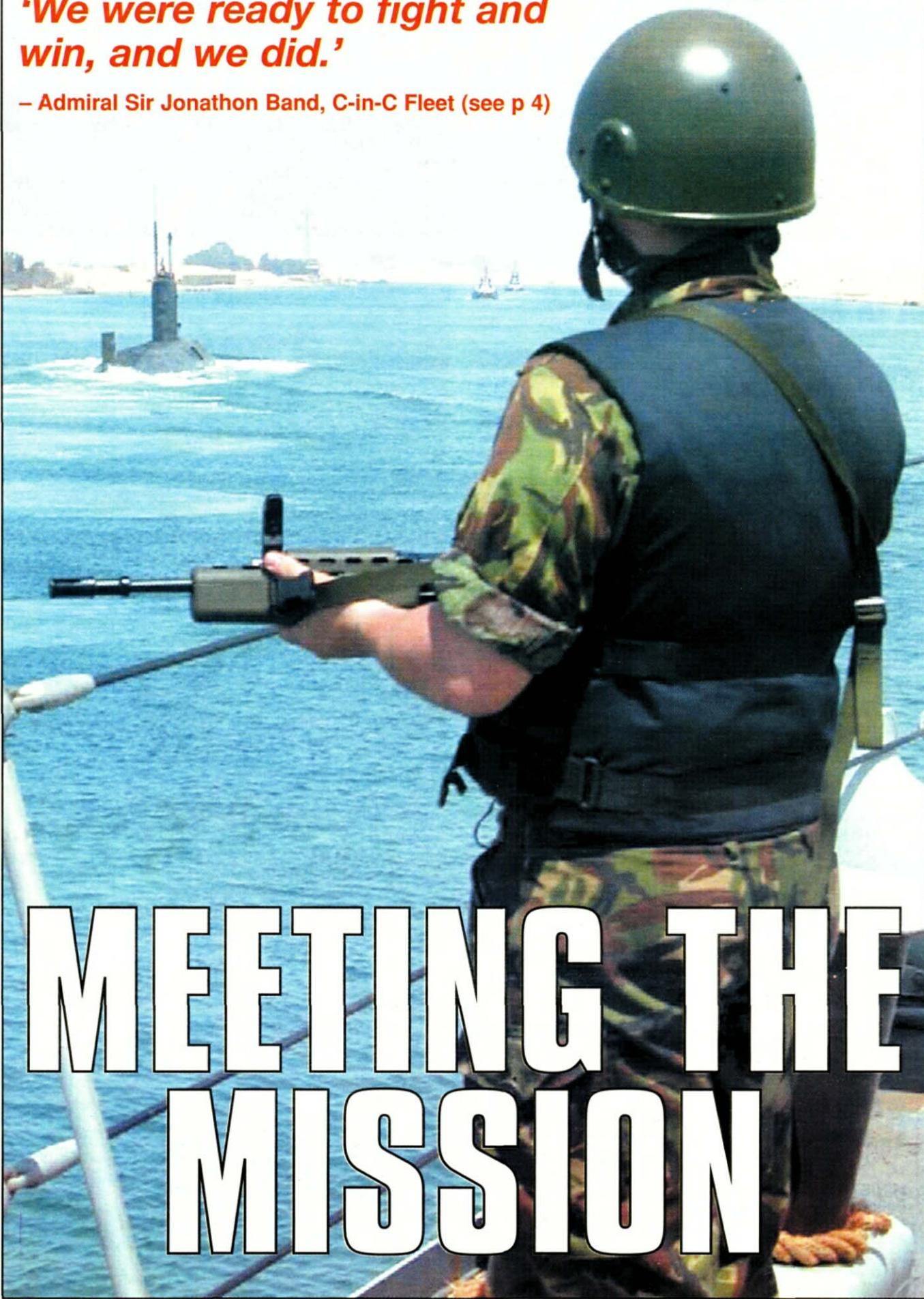
Operation Telic

'We were ready to fight and win, and we did.'

– Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, C-in-C Fleet (see p 4)



● **HMS Northumberland** escorts the nuclear-powered submarine **HMS Turbulent** through the Suez Canal as she comes to the end of a record-breaking ten-month deployment, the latter part spent in the operation against Saddam Hussein's Iraq. See page 10



£4.3 billion destroyer programme launched

PRODUCTION of HMS Daring, first of the new Type 45 class of anti-air warfare destroyers, has been officially launched at BAE Systems' yard at Govan, Glasgow by Defence Procurement Minister Lord Bach.

At around 7,350 tonnes and over 150m long, the Type 45s will be the biggest and most powerful air defence destroyers ever built for the Royal Navy.

The current contract, with BAE Systems as prime contractor, is for six ships with orders for more expected in the next few years.

They will be built by BAE on the Clyde and by Vosper Thornycroft at Portsmouth.

Equipped with the world-lead-

ing Principal Anti-Air Missile System (PAAMS), the Type 45 will provide a quantum leap in technology when it is introduced later in the decade.

Said Lord Bach: "When HMS Daring enters service, she will set new standards in anti-air warfare.

The Type 45 represents a 21st century response to the most sophisticated threats that might face UK or allied ships in the years to come.

"When allied to the new aircraft carriers, our new attack sub and to a range of other new amphibious and support vessels currently under construction, this demonstrates our firm commitment to maintaining and enhancing our maritime capabilities.

"This programme of new war construction is the largest in the country for years and is creating and sustaining large numbers of jobs at shipyards across the UK.

"The design phase of the project, which is now reaching its conclusion, has been a tremendous success for all involved.

"The Type 45 moves into production with a level of design maturity that far exceeds what has been possible on previous warship programmes. While building a warship remains an extremely complex business, the progress made on design will bring real benefits during the construction process."

The cost of the first six ships is expected to be about £4.3 billion and their construction is expected to sustain over 2,000 jobs on the Clyde and around 650 at Portsmouth.

Also, many other UK companies are benefiting from work on the programme, including over 30 subcontracted to the prime contractor.

The in-service date for the first Type 45, HMS Daring is 2007, with the other five ships entering service between then and 2011.

New look for Droggies at Drake

A NEW combined Hydrography and Meteorology training facility for the Royal Navy has been opened at HMS Drake by C-in-C Fleet Admiral Sir Jonathon Band.

The new facility is part of the Maritime Warfare School based at HMS Collingwood in Hampshire. It brings together the Met School, formerly located at RN Air Station Culdrose, and the long-established Hydrography School at HMS Drake.

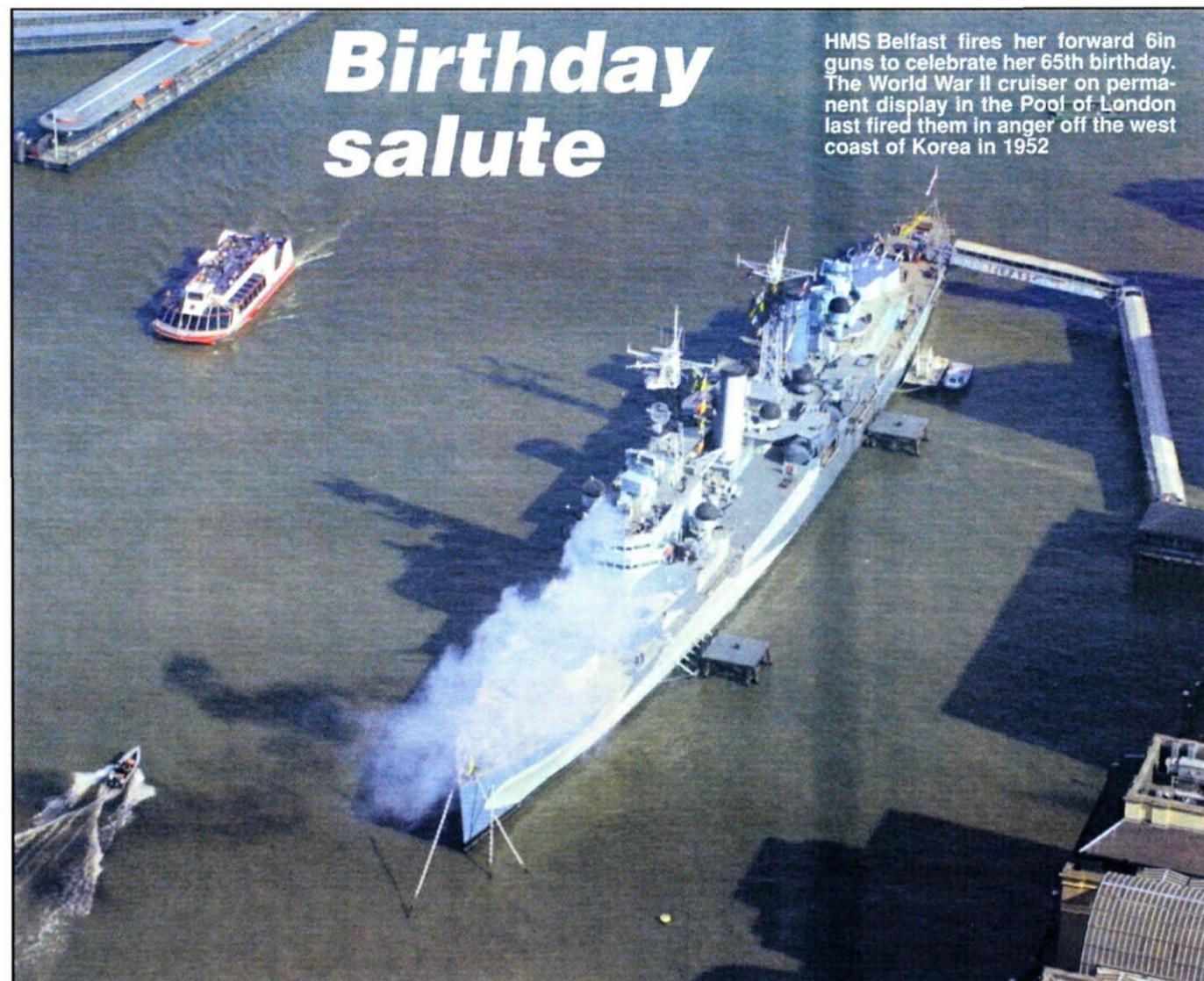
The amalgamation of the school reflects the changes to form one specialist branch within the Royal Navy.

Military advantage gained by a comprehensive knowledge of maritime environmental data is recognised as a key component of warfare. As well as training Royal Navy personnel the new facility will train sailors from foreign and Commonwealth navies.

Commanding Officer of the new facility Cdr Jeffrey Faulkner told *Navy News*: "My staff are now well equipped to train specialists giving them the ability to provide military advantage at sea by delivering comprehensive environmental assessments and forecasts."

DO YOU KNOW THIS MAN?

MINISTRY of Defence Police would like to identify this man in connection with an enquiry. If you recognise him, please contact PC Alison Bain of Portsmouth CID on Portsmouth Naval Base ext 20498 or BT 023 9272 0498



Birthday salute

HMS Belfast fires her forward 6in guns to celebrate her 65th birthday. The World War II cruiser on permanent display in the Pool of London last fired them in anger off the west coast of Korea in 1952

Endeavour replica ends a Bible story

REPLICA of Captain Cook's ship, the bark Endeavour, was due at Falmouth on March 27 to deliver a much-travelled bible to the National Maritime Museum Cornwall.

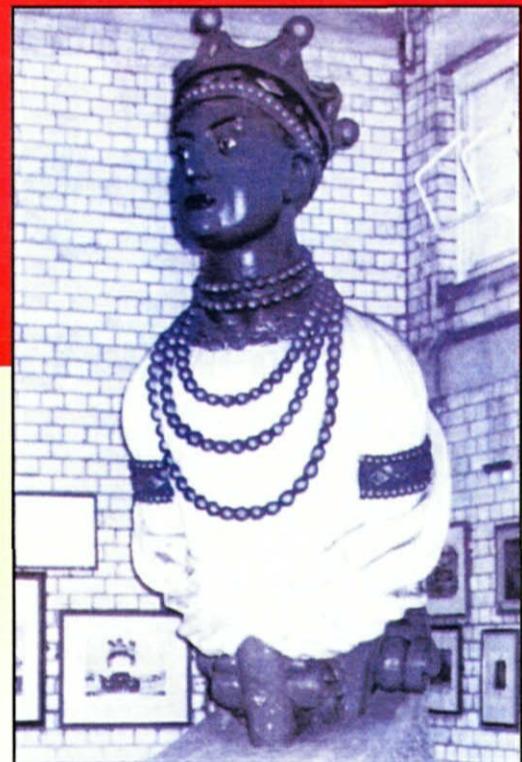
When Sir Robin Knox-Johnston sailed from Falmouth 34 years ago to start the first single-handed non-stop circumnavigation of the world, he took a bible signed by the Chaplain to the Mission to Seamen, the Rev David Roberts.

After 312 days at sea, on April 22, 1969, Sir Robin sailed back into Falmouth and into the history books – and handed the bible, now also signed by himself, to Roberts.

Some time later he passed it to Nigel Rowe, who competed in the 1994/95 Around Alone race and who also delivered it back to Roberts.

When the Endeavour last came to Falmouth in 1997, Capt Chris Blake and Padre Roberts attended a party in celebration of the promise of funding for the Museum and Roberts said Blake should now take the bible with him on Endeavour as she headed off around the world.

FIGUREHEADS



HMS GANGES

BUILT as a 2nd rate with 84 guns at Bombay in 1821, Ganges was the second vessel of the name, the first being a 3rd rate of 1782 broken up in 1816.

Her service career had a number of notable highlights. She is reputed to have been the last sailing line-of-battle ship in the Royal Navy and the last British warship to round Cape Horn under sail.

She did not pay off until 1861, after winning battle honours at Syria in 1840, landing troops and bombarding Beirut and at the blockade of Alexandria. In 1854 she saw service in the Crimea.

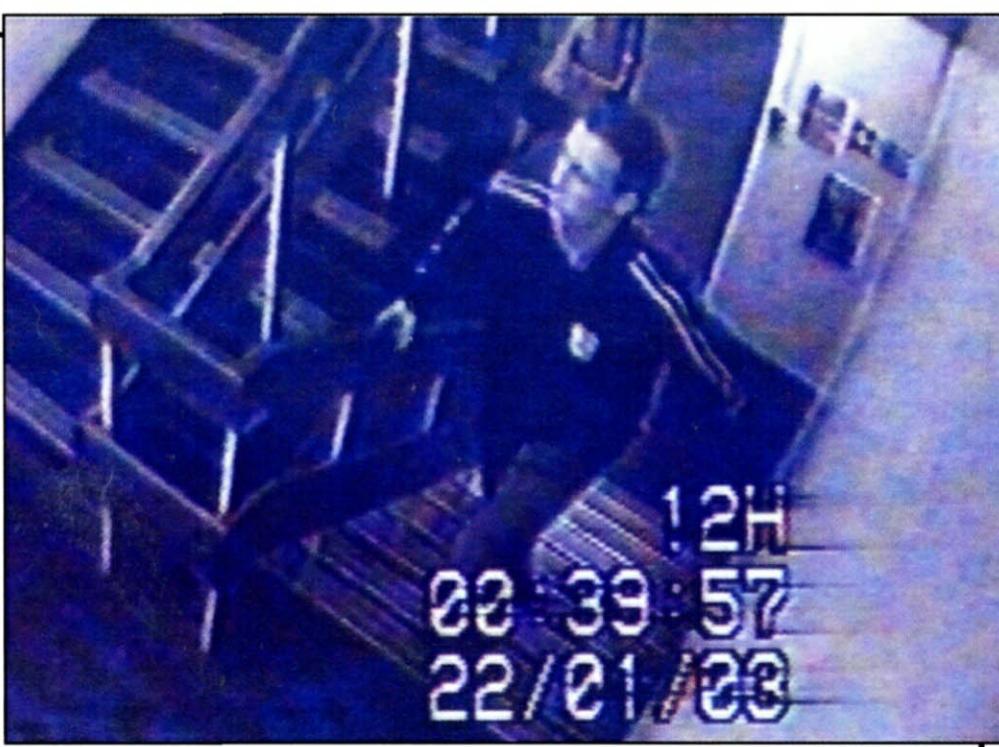
In 1858 she was the flagship of the Pacific Squadron based at Valparaiso under Admiral Sir Robert Baynes.

By 1865 she was employed as a training ship at Portsmouth and in that role underwent several name changes (Tenedos III at Plymouth, Indus V and finally Impregnable III in 1910) before she was sold to be broken up in 1929 after over a century of unbroken service.

The best-known Ganges, of course, was the boys training establishment at Shotley, where for many years this figurehead stood beneath the famous main mast.

It was later moved to the gymnasium (where this photograph was taken in the early 1960s) and remained there until the place closed in June 1976, when it moved to the Royal Hospital School at Holbrook in Suffolk.

There it can be seen today, standing on a granite base outside the main building – a three-quarter length figure over 6ft high, carved to represent an Indian prince of the Ganges region.





Operation Telic



PLYMOUTH SAYS IT WITH FLOWERS

MASSES of flowers have been laid outside the Royal Marines Barracks at Stonehouse, Plymouth in memory of Servicemen lost during the conflict in Iraq.

A UK Forces Gulf Fund has been set up to provide extra welfare support to personnel taking part in Operation Telic in the Gulf and their families, as well as civilian personnel accompanying and attached to the Armed Forces and their dependents.

People receiving relief from the fund may include those who have lost loved ones and require short-term financial help before receiving pension benefits. Those who suffer disabilities and need special equipment also qualify.

Those wishing to make donations may do so using debit or credit cards at www.UKForcesGulfFund.org

OPERATION Telic, the campaign to topple the regime of Saddam Hussein, saw the Royal Navy deploy its biggest amphibious force since 1982 – and its first helicopter-borne amphibious assault since Suez.

It left the UK in mid January under the command of Commodore Jamie Miller, flying his flag in the Fleet Flagship, HMS Ark Royal.

Deployed as distinct Task Units, the Amphibious Task Group (ATG) came together for the first time off Cyprus after a two-week passage. There it conducted a major amphibious exercise called a 'Wader', in which amphibious assault drills were practised.

The ATG, consisting of 22 ships, a Commando Group, 45 helicopters and 6,000 sailors, marines, soldiers and airmen, then received orders to sail through Suez for the Gulf, ready for operations against Saddam's Iraq.

Sailing through the Straits of Hormuz on February 9, the ATG conducted environmental and integration training and further amphibious exercises, including two full rehearsals, before declaring 'Fully Operationally Capable' for its mission on February 25.

Next came a period of poise, which saw the ATG applying military pressure to Saddam's regime by demonstrating a clear commitment to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1441 – a key

UK Government strategic objective – while the Army and RAF completed their deployments to theatre.

On March 20 the ATG was ordered to execute its mission to secure the Al Faw peninsula and seize the vital oil infrastructure, both at sea and offshore, for the Iraqi people.

Fully prepared, confident and in true military style, the ATG con-

ducted a helicopter-borne amphibious assault onto their objective – the first since the Suez campaign of 1956.

With 849 Squadron A Flight providing overland surveillance, escorts on the gun-line for Naval Fire Support, and HMS Ark Royal and HMS Ocean 17 nautical miles off the Iraqi coast, D Coy, 40 Cdo Royal Marines led the fight to free the Iraqi people



Helicopter assault first since Suez '56



● **HMS Ark Royal** – now on her way home from the Gulf – conducts gunnery serials with the British Task Group in Operation Telic. In the foreground are two Landing Craft Vehicle and Personnel (LCPVs) from 9 Assault Squadron Royal Marines embarked in HMS Ocean. Bringing up the rear is the Type 42 destroyer HMS Liverpool. Inset: HMS Ramsey leaves Portsmouth for the 5,000 mile voyage to the Gulf, where she is to take part in the ongoing mine clearance operation





Operation Telic



'ALL OUR PEOPLE KNOW THEY HAVE DONE WHAT THEY WERE ASKED TO DO'

Success across the board - but the beat goes on

THE FOCUS of world attention may be on the war in Iraq, but no one should forget that it is business as usual in other parts of the globe, according to one of our most senior officers.

Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Jonathon Band paid tribute to the efforts of the men and women involved

in fighting and support operations in the Middle East and at home - but he was determined that other operations were not forgotten.

"Clearly at a time like this, embarked on major operations in the Middle East, the focus will be on them and the Royal Navy's part in them," said Admiral Band in an exclusive interview with *Naval News*.

"But I still think it is important that people do not forget that the Navy continues with operations around the world."

"For example, the deterrent and the deployment of HMS Iron Duke, RFA Black Rover and Royal Marines protection teams to Sierra Leone which has just successfully been achieved."

Admiral Band hoped that further successes in a wide range of Navy operations, from anti-drugs patrols in the Caribbean to Operation Active Endeavour in the Med to fishery protection duties around the UK coast would be recognised.

"This is an issue of giving due coverage to what is happening, and importantly for our own people to see them getting the credit for what they do," he said.

"Clearly, with the very major operation we have been involved in, there is a huge strain on the Navy and its people, and certainly if there is no solution to the fire-fighters' strike then the strain will continue to be enormous."

Operation Telic, the campaign to oust Saddam Hussein and disarm his regime had shown the value of the Navy's amphibious capability and advanced force and strike operations.

"Our major contribution was to get an amphibious task group, based around HMS Ark Royal, HMS Ocean and the supporting RFA's, and one of the Royal Marines Commandos, into the area by sea, and to join up with the Armilla, Oracle, Survey, Submarine and MCM forces already there."

"That was achieved - we were there by February 15, which was the day we said we'd be there."

The deployment of 3 Cdo Bde had been a crucial factor in the early stages of the war, with 40 Cdo and 42 Cdo being put into the Al Faw peninsula.

That mission was achieved with great success, as was the subsequent move by 42 Cdo into the port of Umm Qasr and that of both commanded in the liberation of Basra.

"The attack into the Al Faw was supported by 845 and 847 Naval Air Squadrons, based in HMS Ocean, and No 8 Sqn RAF Chinooks and 849 Sqn from HMS Ark Royal.

"The taking of the Al Faw was very important for two reasons: one, it secured an area of strategic oil importance, and second, it allowed us to start the mine countermeasures effort to make it safe to get shipping up to Umm Qasr.

"The MCM operations will continue for some time, but we were able to get RFA Sir Galahad with the initial load of humanitarian assistance into Umm Qasr in the first week."

The MCM force and Diving Group subsequently worked to clear the approaches to, and jetties of, Umm Qasr for later merchant ships.

The start of the operation saw two very sad helicopter accidents. The first involved the deaths of eight members of 3 Cdo Bde during the assault when the American helicopter in which they were flying crashed.



● 'We were the first to deploy... Don't get the start right and you have a problem.' - Admiral Sir Jonathon Band on board HMS Marlborough, one of the ships that provided gunfire support in the taking of the Al Faw peninsula

tained a very accurate surface picture against the asymmetric threat.

"Additionally, the destroyers Liverpool, York and Edinburgh have provided force protection to the heavies and maintained the required Air Defence posture."

Wall-to-wall coverage of the war in British newspapers and on television had, after the initial attacks, concentrated on the land forces' progress - which had not come as a great surprise to Naval commanders.

"What is true in this campaign, like so many others, is that the key and vital Naval contribution is in the early stages. Don't get the start right and you have a problem."

"Indeed, we were the first to deploy. We provided the Prime Minister with the first combat units in theatre. We took part in the first days of the campaign, and the whole Amphibious Task Group and others have supported subsequent operations."

"We just have to accept that when the focus militarily and politically moves ashore that some of our warfare support activities get less attention."

"My view overall is that the part the Naval Service, in the widest sense, had to play has received reasonable and accurate coverage, but we have to accept that, for example, some members of the Press were more excited by the dolphins hunting mines than by our mine countermeasures vessels."

"The important thing is that all our people know they have done what they were asked to do; they have done it professionally and they have done it successfully."

"The Naval Service proved itself to be ready, both materially and mentally, for what was asked of them and have conducted all operations to the professional standard and success that we would expect."

"What one must remember in all this is that much of maritime endeavour is being done by men and women in their young twenties - and the way they are responding is a credit to them, their Service

and the country.

"We were ready to fight and win, and we did."

"And I would certainly wish to put on record the huge contribution of the DLO in all this."

"Indeed, when one talks about support from home the whole of the Naval Service is involved. I would certainly mention the NPFS and Casualty Reporting Centre."

"I could go on - but I think the success of those at home in the support for the Royal visits to Devonport, Portsmouth, Poole and Yeovilton is an indication of how everyone has come together in this instance to give the families the support that they deserve."

Now that the initial phase of the campaign had been completed, it was time for Naval planners to consider what level of support was required to remain in the Northern Arabian Gulf, and which ships could be spared to return home or to other duties.

"Clearly the force we sent out was the one that we believed met the missions that the Naval Service was given."

"Consequent on the progress of the campaign, and the continuing parts that the Naval Service will make to it, the force levels out there are being reassessed - and indeed as I give this interview Turbulent has returned home, the Ark Group is heading back, and a revised NTG Group is preparing to head East."

"Other units such as the Brigade, Ocean and some supply RFA's will remain for a while longer."

"And indeed the MCM effort is likely to continue for some time, as I foresee a requirement not only to deal with the mines, but also with ordnance that is in the area from previous conflicts."

"Some of the tasks in the Middle East will endure past this specific campaign - for example, I would expect our contribution to Armilla patrols and the War against Terrorism to continue for the foreseeable future."

Another significant contribution has been that of RFA Argus in her role as a Primary Casualty Receiving Ship - which to you or me is a hospital.

"Indeed, the RFAs generally have given their typically high levels of fuel, food, stores and ammo support aided by the Sea Kings of 820 Naval Air Squadron.

"Additionally, RFA Diligence has been a real success with her embarked maintenance teams.

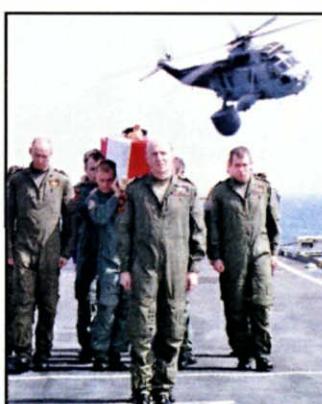
"I have already mentioned the contribution of 845, 847 and 849 Squadrons in support of the amphibious operations, but I would also like to make note of the initial operational deployment of Merlin, where 814 Naval Air Squadron have maintained a 24 hours a day, seven days a week coverage of the whole of the Northern Arabian Gulf.

"And with the Lynx flights, for the first time equipped with night vision goggles, ensured we main-



● ON PATROL: Cpl Dan Ackroyd mans the General Purpose Machine Gun on a 'Landing Craft Air Cushioned' on the Az Zubayr river near Umm Qasr

ROLL OF HONOUR



● A repatriation ceremony on board HMS Ark Royal for Lt Andrew Wilson, among six British and one US crew killed when two Sea King helicopters of 849 Sqn A flight collided over the northern Arabian Gulf on March 22

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Last chapter begins for Invincible

WELCOMED back into the Fleet this month, carrier HMS Invincible has completed her second refit – the ship's final major upkeep period – that has been designed to keep her at the forefront of action until the end of the decade.

The work period at Rosyth Naval Dockyard spanned from September 2001 to January 2003 when Invincible

set off back to her Portsmouth home. Later this year in September Invincible will step forward to take Ark Royal's place as the 'on-call' aircraft carrier.

Brought bang up to date with the latest Naval technology, the work included customizing the hangar to welcome the new Merlin helicopter, and installing new colour flat computer-screens in the Ops Room.

Her engines have also been tended to, with the replacement of the main gear-wheel of the starboard gear box – no mean feat considering its 20-tonne weight and the need to take the old one out through the side of the ship.

As the first and oldest, Invincible gives her name to the class of current carriers, which have five main operational roles. These include: command and control; power projection using Harriers (GR7 and FA2); power projection using helicopters; sea control with the Merlin; and maritime strike and air defence using her suite of aircraft.

But eyes are turned to the two future carriers which are expected to come into service early in the next decade and will bear the British-variant of the Joint Strike Fighter, also known as the F35.

Invincible served with distinction in the 1982 Falklands Conflict, and has played vital roles in Adriatic operations and the bombing of Bosnia. In the late 1990s her FA2 Sea Harriers flew combat patrols to enforce the No-Fly zone over southern Iraq, and on her return home she was called to the Balkans to provide protection for NATO forces and to support the refugee aid programme.

There have been six Invincibles within the Royal Navy, plus one putative Invincible that was renamed the Black Prince in 1859, two years before completion.

The name began with the capture of a French ship in 1747 at Cape Finisterre that served until wrecked in 1758. The second



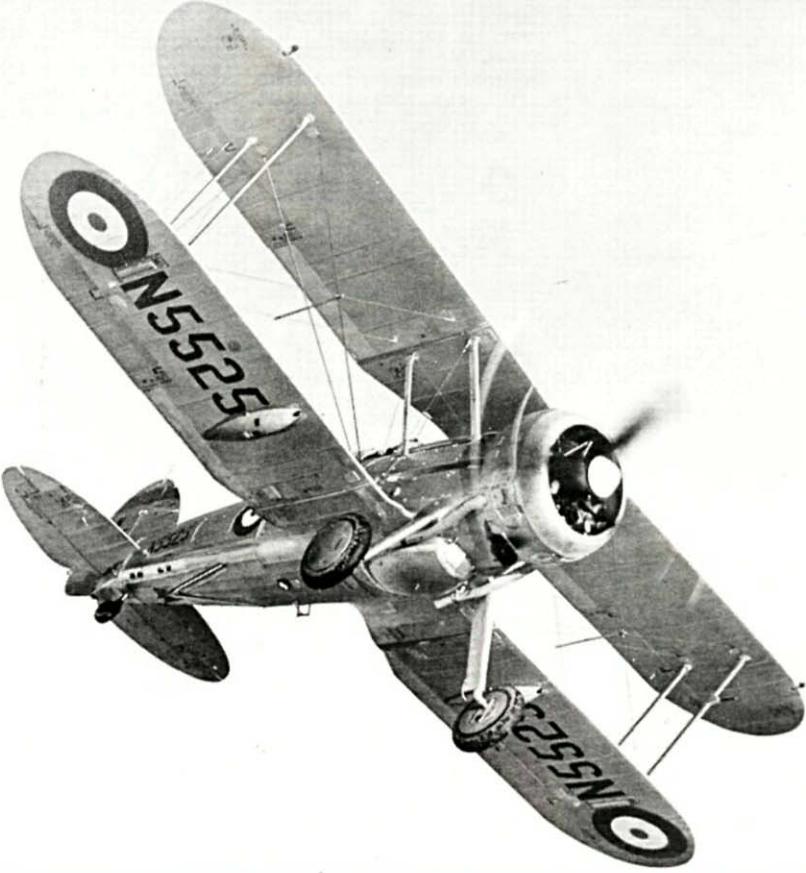
● HMS Invincible arrives back at her Portsmouth home after her 18-month refit in Scotland

Picture: PO(Phot) Gary Davies

Facts and figures

Class: Invincible class aircraft carrier
Pennant number: R05
Builder: Vickers Shipbuilders Ltd, Barrow-in-Furness
Laid down: July 20, 1973
Launched: May 3, 1977 by the Queen
Commissioned: July 11, 1980
Displacement: 20,000 tonnes
Length: 210 metres
Beam: 35 metres
Speed: 30 knots (max); 18 knots (cruising)
Complement: 680 (over 1,100 when squadrons embarked)
Main machinery: Four Rolls Royce Olympus Marine Gas Turbines
Weapons: Three Goalkeeper (7 barrel electric gatling gun), two 20mm cannon gun
Aircraft: Capable of carrying Sea Harriers (FA2), RAF Harriers (GR7), Merlin and Sea King Mk7 AEW (Airborne Early Warning) Helicopters. Up to 15 aircraft dependent on role.

AIRCRAFT OF THE ROYAL NAVY No 79



● A Gloster Sea Gladiator clearly showing the dinghy fairing and arrester hook

Picture: Fleet Air Arm Museum

Gloster Sea Gladiator

FAMED for their defence of Malta in June 1940, the Gloster Sea Gladiator of the Fleet Air Arm was close kin to the RAF's Gladiator – the last biplane fighter for both services.

The main distinctions centred on the sea-borne role for the aircraft: catapult points; deck arrester hook; and a fairing that held a dinghy. Sixty dedicated Sea Gladiators were built for the FAA, with another 38 RAF Gladiators converted to the maritime form. Indeed the four Sea Gladiators that fought in the Maltese skies had been borrowed back by the RAF for that purpose.

The Sea Gladiator took over from the

Hawker Nimrods in 1938, and in turn stepped aside for the Grumman Martlet in the final days of 1940.

As a single-seat fighter, the Sea Gladiator had a metal structure with light fabric and metal covering that added up to a total weight of 3,553lb when empty. The wings spanned 32ft 3in and in length the aircraft stretched 27ft 5in.

The maximum speed was 245mph at 10,000ft with a range of 425 miles and endurance of 2hrs 15mins. It carried four Browning machine guns, in the fuselage and below the wings.

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Letters

Jack



Tarzan, I presume?

FURTHER to your story about 'Slim' Somerville's sense of humour (March issue), here is another example.

In late 1943 I was PO LTO in the submarine HMS Tactician, operating from HMS Adamant out of Trincomalee on patrols down the Malacca Straits.

The boat had no air conditioning and the temperatures inside varied between 100F and 140F, so the rig on board was usually just a pair of khaki shorts or a bit of curtaining draped around our waists.

Before sailing they had stacked the boat full of green limes and yams which were stuffed away everywhere, even behind the diesels.

We were going on a particularly dangerous patrol to lay mines off Singapore.

We were nearly ready to proceed when Admiral Somerville's barge came to Adamant's gangway and a few minutes later he crossed over, just giving time for our skipper to don a shirt and uniform cap and greet him.

'Slim' then walked through the boat with the skipper, catching us all on the hop.

He had a few words with our Chief Tiffy, 'Shiner' Wright, who was just wearing a pair of shorts and his usual trilby hat.

Then he came aft into my Motor Room, had a few words with me and the crew – and then poked his nose into 'Hell's Kitchen', the Stokers' Mess right aft.

We had a killick stoker nicknamed 'Chopper' Harvey who usually walked around his Mess stark naked. He was very well endowed in the courting department, which was why he was called 'Chopper'.

Anyway, he was sitting on his top bunk, completely nude and surrounded by piles of green fruit.

The Admiral emerged from the Mess grinning all over his face and said to me and my crew: 'Tarzan of the bloody apes, I presume.'

He then proceeded to address our crew and officers on the after casing and wished us good hunting.

He was that sort of admiral. – I. A. Nethercott, Canvey Island, Essex

Tears of a Long Island light keeper

LIKE most people over here, I've followed events in Iraq and wanted to express some gratitude to our Coalition allies.

In 1982 I was the keeper of the Montauk lighthouse on the eastern tip of Long Island, NY. I was out making my morning round when I noticed the QEII several miles to the south, sitting dead in the water.

It was common to see large ships making their way to and from New York, but rare to see one not making way, so I turned on our Marine Band radio and called her on Channel 13.

I identified my station and asked if she was in need of assistance and got an immediate response, explaining that she was on a day cruise out of New York harbour and had simply come to 'all stop' to kill some time so that the transit back would put them at the entrance to the harbour at high water.

The speaker identified himself as the Captain of the ship. Since he had a few moments to kill, he inquired if I did, too. Being a lighthouse keeper, I did. We shifted our conversation to an off frequency and he began asking me a series of questions about life at the Montauk light.

Eventually our conversation turned to events in the Falklands – and at that point his lighthearted tone changed in mid-sentence, I was certain that had they been

leaving a long pause.

Then he told me he had just received some bad personal news. He had been informed that the Atlantic Conveyor had taken a missile through the bridge and that his former shipmate and longtime friend Capt Ian North had lost his life in the attack.

I had spent a number of years in the North Atlantic conducting off-shore heavy weather rescue and understood how close friendships can be among those who sail together and how deep the feeling of loss when you lose such a close friend.

There came another long pause which I finally broke by my fumbling attempts at expressing my condolences. At some time after that he said his time was up and that he would have to be making his way back to New York harbour. We bade each other farewell and I wished him fair winds and following seas.

That same night I watched the television news with stunned sadness as I saw the report detailing the attack on the Atlantic Conveyor and felt the tears running down my cheeks. I felt anger and frustration, wanting to do something other than watch from the sidelines.

I was certain that had they been

American ships under attack, it could not have been more painful to see.

I'm retired from the US Coast Guard now and just lately I was watching the unfolding events in Iraq on TV when my wife came home from work and I began telling her how our British troops had taken casualties.

My unconscious choice of words momentarily caught me by surprise – but on reflection I realised they were really the only proper words.

My wife and I made a pledge that night to pray for the safety of "our" British troops – and I know that on the other side of the Atlantic there are good friends standing with us praying for "their" American troops and all the other troops within the coalition.

May God bless and protect every one of them. – P. K. Driscoll, San Diego, California

Letters to the Editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication. email correspondents are also requested to provide this information.

Rig of the day provokes a fashion statement

I TOOK advantage of the First Sea Lord's invitation to former Royal Navy personnel to wear uniforms and promote the Service when occasion merits.

I have just attended a wedding reception at my 'local'. My old serge uniform was a bit green when I dug it from my old kitbag, but it brushed up well.

The 32in bells, sea jersey and black cap did seem slightly out the rig of the day, but what really annoyed me was the drunken ex-'crab' who staggered into me and knocked me off my Zimmer frame, damaging my hip replacement that I had waited five years to have done.

This experience raises the following points:

- Can I claim from the Pusser for my hip?
- Are there any 'Rig of the Day' rules?
- Can we use the Slop Room at Drake to update our uniforms?

– W. Williams, Okehampton.

YOU MENTION Admiral West as saying that uniform regulations allow for former members of the Naval Service to wear uniform.

I have believed this may be correct for ex-RN officers, but I am sure it is not correct for ex Ratings, although I am sure a number of them would be delighted to wear their old Number 1s for an appropriate occasion.

Here in France their veterans do take this seriously. – P. Hughes, Callac, Brittany

Original Ro Ros

THE LSTs Mk III such as Stalker were not referred to as 'winnettes' (March issue).

This term was only used for the three Mk Is, Boxer, Bruiser and Thruster, diminutives of a monstrous proposal by Churchill known informally as 'Winstons'.

The Mk IIIs were heavy, as too many UK yards could not build light welded hulls nor lightweight diesels. However, in post war commercial service they inaugurated a number of vehicle ferry routes. Unlike so many later Ro Ro ferries, they would float upright with the vehicle deck flooded, thanks to Sir Rowland Baker's design. – D. K. Brown, Bath

Sikorsky memory

AIRCRAFT of the Royal Navy No 76, featuring the Vought-Sikorsky Kingfisher, brought back family memories in our house.

My wife Sallie's father Joseph Barr was one of the Chance-Vought-Sikorsky team who were involved with the arrangements for supply of the Kingfisher to the RN.

Joe went on to become president of the Sikorsky Division of United Technologies, which also encompassed Pratt & Whitney.

However, the fondest memory evoked was when Sallie went up in an early Sikorsky helicopter with the great man himself while Joe was brokering a deal with some South American generals for the sale of same. – P. H. Palmer, Largo, Florida

Hood faces

I AM the researcher for the HMS Hood Association and their website at www.hmshood.com

For a couple of years now we have had an appeal running to obtain photos of the 1,415 men lost in what was the Royal Navy's largest single ship loss during World War II.

We started the appeal around Christmas 2000, hoping to have 60 photos by May 2001 – the 60th anniversary.

The response exceeded our wildest expectations and to date we have around 413.

To my knowledge this is the largest collection of its type for any Royal Navy ship – which is certainly fitting for Hood.

We are starting to struggle now with around 1,000 to go, so if anyone has any additions we will be pleased to receive them.

The photos are all displayed on the Association's web site and are also proudly displayed each year at the Association Reunion at the Royal Sailors Home Club. – P. Bevand

Ex-Warspites

MY MATE Roy Emmington, who lives in Chatham, asks if you will be doing a feature on HMS Warspite. He joined her as a boy of 15 in 1938 and was with her at Matapan, the Norwegian campaign etc and right up to D-Day. – H. Bryce, Greenock.

ENCLOSED is a photo of my 4ft model of HMS Warspite, in which I served 1942-44 which I would like to give to any museum or organisation where it can be viewed, provided it can be collected from me. – P. A. Wilson, Ocean Grove, Victoria, Australia.



Navy News

No. 586 48th year

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Letters



ALDENHAM NOT THE LAST SHIP SUNK

I SERVED in the Royal Navy from 1941-46 and I must correct you on your article on the sinking of HMS Aldenham (February issue).

She was not the last British warship to be sunk in the 1939-45 war as this went on a bit longer than 1944. In fact some of us carried on afterwards on mine clearance. In 1945, according to the Admiralty Statement of Loss, a further 48 ships of all classes were lost. — J. McGregor, Bristol.

I WAS serving in the destroyer HMS Savage at the entrance of the Kola Inlet with a convoy of merchant ships on March 20, 1945 when we were aware that one of our flock had been torpedoed and was falling away. Some time later, HMS Lapwing was hit in the stern by a torpedo and sank very quickly taking 158 of her crew with her. We picked up one man and tried for a long time to save him but he was later buried at sea.

On our next convoy in April we lost HMS Goodall, again with heavy loss of life. She was the last ship to be torpedoed and sunk in those waters.

HMS Vestal, an Algerine minesweeper, was sunk by a kamikaze plane off the coast of Malaya and HMS Squirrel was sunk by a mine while trying to pick up survivors, all before the end of World War II. — G. Hooton, Wellingborough.

ACCORDING to my information the last British Naval vessel to be sunk was the trawler HMT Ebor Wyke, torpedoed by a U-Boat off the SE coast of Iceland on May 2, 1945.

During World War II over 400 trawlers, drifters and whalers of the RN Patrol Service were lost, losses which were far in excess of any other branch. — M. G. Robinson, Minehead.

Neither N nor S

I WAS the youngest member of the survey ship HMS Challenger's ship's company when we 'crossed the line' so they made sure it was a pukka ceremony.

The certificate was made by the map makers on board and I have never seen another one. It was presented to me on the day I left Challenger at Torres Straits early in 1945. — H. R. Hunt, Maidenhead

Crossing the Line certificates are rarely as detailed as this one. We would be interested to see more of them. — Ed



Missing the juke

IN ABOUT 1969 the 69 Club at the RAF base at Khormaksar, Aden mislaid its Wurlitzer jukebox.

HMS Hermes, renowned for her spirit of enterprise, was in Aden at the time and it has been suggested that the jukebox (the return or whereabouts of which is not sought) may have found its way on board on temporary loan.

Did it, and if so was it carried, did it walk, fly or was it able to swim?

And did it ever play again? Can anyone please help solve this mystery which has been raised by an old light blue? — E. Maclean, 8 Telford Terrace, London SW1V 3AE

• *HMS Hermes off Aden in 1967 after taking over in the Far East Fleet from HMS Victorious.*

Unicorn walked tall in Korea

AS WE approach the 50th anniversary of the end of the Korean War a reminder of HMS Unicorn's role might be timely.

She was on her second commission, 1949-51, and was in Japanese waters when the Korean troubles began.

The third commission was from 1951-54 and she returned to the UK in October 1953, having been on foreign service for 4½ years.

She was the tallest ship built for the RN, because another deck was added to accommodate two hangars for repair and maintenance and she was instantly recognised by all because of the overhang at the stern where the lighter was stowed. Going under Sydney Harbour Bridge caused consternation for all watching as she cleared it by just four or five feet.

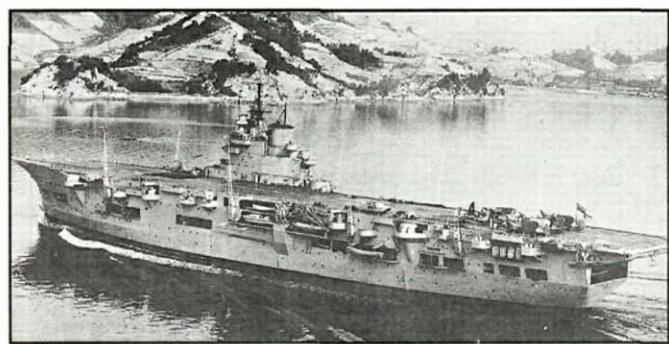
First commissioned in January 1943, she was operational until October 1943 but in the December took up the role for which she was built.

Leaving the UK she did not return until January 1946 and during this time was the constant back-up needed by the squadrons to keep our aeroplanes flying until Germany and Japan had been defeated.

During the Korean War Unicorn transported many battalions of soldiers and some of them are now associate members of the Unicorn Association.

She was the only known UK carrier to have been engaged in a ship to shore bombardment using her 4in guns. This was in North Korea. She was always a very happy ship and is remembered with pride and affection. — E. Bosworth, Hemel Hempstead

HMS Unicorn, the only one of her class, operated as an aircraft carrier and as an aircraft repair and maintenance ship. — Ed



• *TALL SHIP: HMS Unicorn shows off her distinctive lines*

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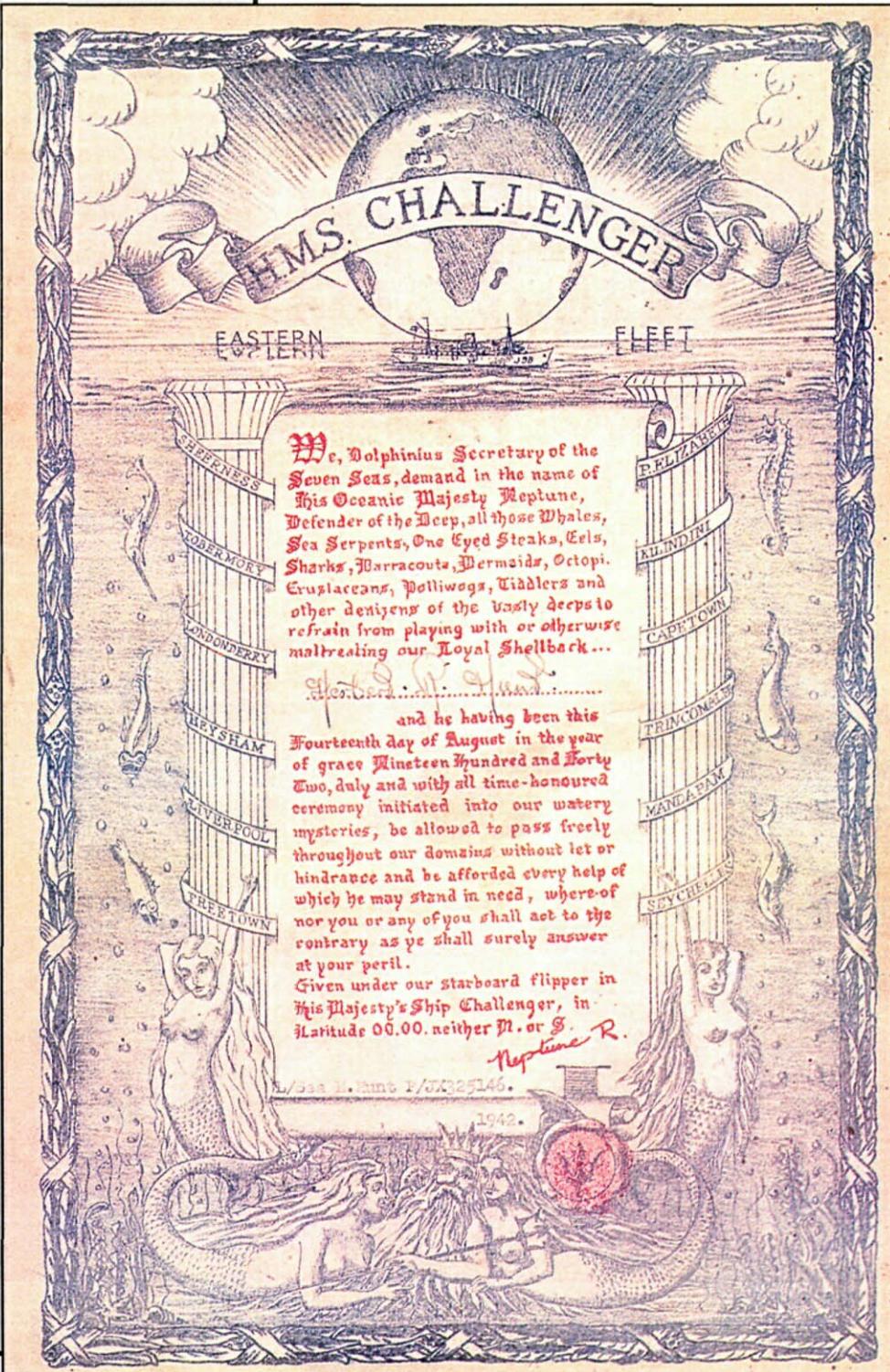
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Helping Hands

Prickly welcome for submariners

A DENSE thicket of brambles left submariners from Devonport-based HMS Trenchant undaunted when they tackled an overgrown area of Ford Park Cemetery.

The 12 volunteers, led by Lt Ed Notley, spent six hours giving the cemetery an overhaul in bright sunshine.

LMEM Jamie 'Rusty' Steele said: "As we came through the driveway it didn't look like there was much to do, then when we walked down from the chapels towards the area they wanted us to concentrate on, we suddenly realised what a mammoth task lay ahead."

Cemetery Groundsman David Wickett praised the team, saying: "They worked with such gusto and have youth and strength on their side. They are such an excellent example of teamwork – just getting on with the task set them."

He added: "Their work means a lot to local people because removal of the brambles has opened up access to family graves."

The Ford Park Cemetery Trust paid tribute to the men's efforts as part of a long-standing connection with the Armed Services which stretches back over more than a century. Over 1,300 Service graves lie within the cemetery's boundaries.

RNBT offers helping arm

THE ROYAL Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT) have helped a Gosport family with a car hoist.

Mrs Margaret Young, the wife of Peter who served with the Navy from 1948-55, is living with osteoarthritis. The RNBT have provided a grant for a hoist to lift her wheelchair into the boot of the family car.

The RNBT accepts grant applications from serving and former personnel and their families.

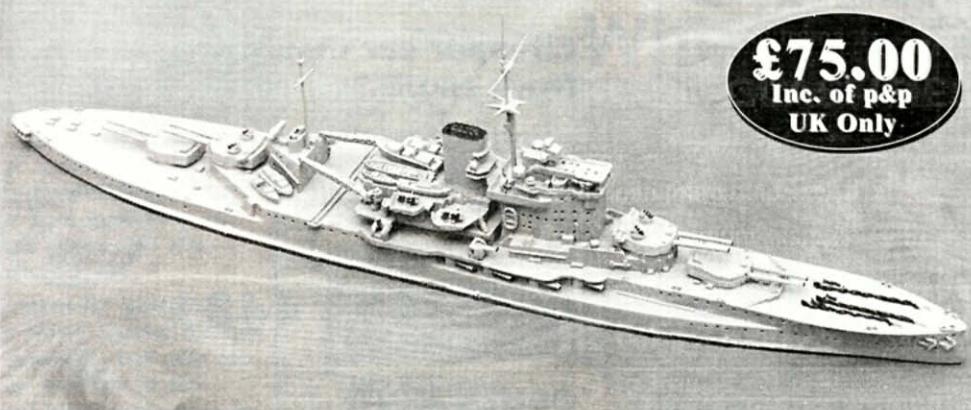
People still serving can offer their support through Voluntary Donations from Pay – contact your UPO for more information.

RNBT: 023 9269 0112



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● Sub Lt Wes Lewis with staff and students at RAF Barkston Heath Picture: Phot Section, RAF College Cranwell

Naval folk go all nasal for a day

THE BIG day set aside for clowning and colour has come round once more, the Comic Relief Red Nose Day – and this year the Navy have been creative in their approach to comedy.

People from the Naval world have fast-talked the other Services into red-nosed behaviour, painted a nose onto one of its ships, got dressed up and been bowled over – among countless other events.

HMS Atherstone arrived back in Portsmouth on Red Nose Day with the round protuberant sonar dome at the front of the ship painted bright red, and complete with a haircut provided by suitably-coloured rope.

At RAF Barkston Heath, Sub Lt Wes Lewis from No.63 Course at the Joint Elementary Flying Training School rallied his classmates into donning ruddy noses.

The 70 personnel drafted in to support the day included instructors and a group of German students, who must have been bewildered by this strange British custom.

The efforts at the Lincolnshire base netted £120 to go into the charity's coffers.

When the Deputy Commander in Chief Fleet Vice Admiral Mark Stanhope arrived at RNAS Culdrose he walked into a pyjama party – but undaunted he gave his support for their fund-raising efforts.

The Aramark staff who run the Atlantic Café at the Naval Air Station had hit upon the idea as a way of brightening up a routine Friday, and parting punters from their spare pennies for a good cause.

All uniting together in one great charity night out, people from the

Navy, Flagship, Aramark and civil service at HMS Excellent took a night out to go bowling for Comic Relief.

As it was in aid of Red Nose Day, some of the prizes took on a bit of twist...

The lowest scoring male ended up wearing a dress for the rest of the evening, and his female counterpart in the loser stakes donned a false beard.

With these incentives, it made for a hard-fought night that earned a total of £115 for the comedic charity.

SSAFA launches award scheme

A SERVICE Volunteer Award scheme has been launched by SSAFA Forces Help and sponsors Wilsons, the military insurance specialists.

The award scheme aims to recognise in-service volunteers for the help and support they have given the Armed Forces and their families in 2002.

There are two awards in the scheme, one for an individual who has made an outstanding achieve-

ment, and the second for the group project that has made the biggest contribution to improving lives of personnel and their families.

If you would like to nominate someone, contact Katy Booker on 020 7463 9257 or visit the website at www.ssafa.org.uk.

■ LEX Defence, the vehicle support service for all three Services and the MOD in the UK, have presented a cheque for £1,372 to SSAFA Forces Help.



A RAPTOROUS welcome was given to the commanding officer and crew of HMS Bulwark when they visited the children and staff of Bidwell Brook School in Dartington, Devon. This was the start of a new relationship forged between the ship and the school, with Bulwark's company planning a number of fundraising activities for the special needs school over the next 12 months while the ship is in build at BAE Systems at Barrow-in-Furness.

News in brief

■ THIS JUNE MA Frazer 'Fluff' Linn is tackling the Edinburgh marathon to raise money for the Children's Hospice Association Scotland.

The medic is based at the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine at Fort Blockhouse, Gosport, but his hometown is just outside the Scottish capital.

Edinburgh will be the third marathon that he has taken on running for this good cause.

If you want to sponsor him, he can be contacted on 023 9250 4154.

■ SMART-WORK by Flag Officer Sea Training's organisation has seen £600 donated by foreign warships visiting Devonport Naval Base.

Sailors from FOST collected the spare change from the ships before they returned to their home ports.

The money has been put to good use by Trengweth School in Plymouth that cares for children with special needs – it will be used to buy specialist sensory equipment.

■ TO MARK the RNR centenary, 60 personnel from HMS Wildfire, the Royal Naval Reserve unit based near Northwood, have run 100 miles to generate over £400 for the RNR Benevolent Trust.

■ THE OXFAM Trailwalker challenge that is planned for July this year is looking for teams of competitors keen to take on 100 miles of the South Downs in less than 30 hours.

Telephone 0870 010 1045.

■ HERE it comes again – the Royal British Legion is organising its fifth Bike-to-Brussels challenge.

The popular three-day event welcomes cyclists from all ends of the spectrum, from relative beginners to seasoned hands.

The 225-mile ride offers the reward of healthy endeavour matched with the opportunity for food and drink indulgence, and all that is asked is that riders raise a minimum of £400 in sponsorship for the British Legion.

The entrance fee of £330 covers ferry crossings and return travel, plus all the important insurance, support and accommodation details.

Telephone: 020 7973 7285.

■ PERUVIAN hills are calling to the chaplain of the Mission to Seafarers in Belfast.

Douglas Goddard is leading the Machu Picchu Challenge 2003 in October this year. The challenge is to raise £2,500 in sponsorship and complete the 24-mile walk.

In preparation, Douglas is being put through his paces three times a week by a personal trainer.

For more information, call 0877 5400.

Picture: Bidwell Brook School



The Royal Navy: The King's Ships

Henry VIII lays the foundations of English naval power with Great Harry and the Mary Rose. It's a legacy that serves his daughter Elizabeth well, as she faces the supreme challenge of the Armada.



The Royal Navy: England's Wooden Walls

Stung by defeat in the American Revolution, it falls to Nelson to reassert British naval power. At Trafalgar he does so emphatically, ushering in a century of British naval dominance.



The Royal Navy: Steam, Steel and Dreadnoughts

Technology develops at an unprecedented rate in the 19th and 20th centuries, culminating in the launch of Dreadnought; a ship that will leave other navies behind.



The Royal Navy: The Sun Never Sets

Despite the tragic losses of WWII and the decline of the British Empire the Royal Navy remains a potent force. War in the Falklands demonstrates yet again what makes the Senior Service indispensable.

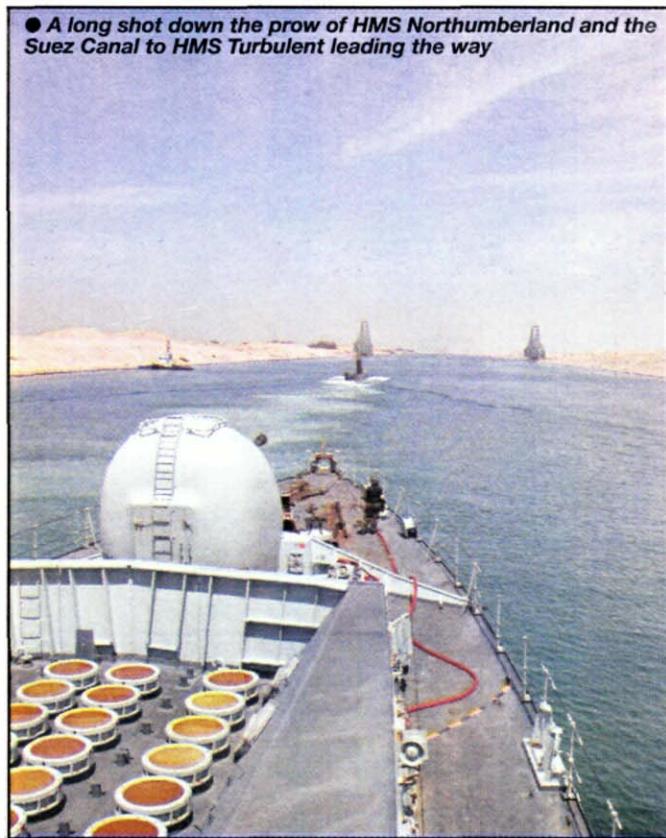
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BUBBLY SINGLE Mum, divorced, slim, blue eyes. Seeks penfriends, friendship. **Box May 4**

FEMALE, SEEKS sailors aged 30-45 to correspond with (no married men or time wasters). **Box May 5**

CHRIS, ROYAL Marine ex-teacher. Met you Poole Officers Mess Nov 01. WLT get in contact. **Box May 6**

ATTRACTIVE, INTELLIGENT, practical, supportive graduate, 42, seeks kind serving Naval officer for friendship/marriage. **Box May 7**

ATTRACTIVE, OUTGOING female, 43, seeking male companion, 35-50. **Box May 8**

I WOULD like someone to correspond with, in the Navy and Royal Marines. I'm a bubbly person. "Many thanks". **Box May 9**

FEMALE, 43. Blonde seeks open minded military person (Mole) to correspond to Age 25-43. **Box May 10**

GULF HERO requires relief form the sand ASAP. **Box May 11**

GENUINE, LONELY, white single mom, slim, 35, GSOH, three children, looking for a genuine friendship/relationship. **Box May 12**

SINGLE FEMALE 37 seeks genuine Marines for friendship/relationship. **Box May 13**

PERSONAL

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You must be over 18 to advertise in this column.



● HMS Turbulent leaves Souda Bay in Crete

Stayaway boat wends way to welcome home

TRAFALGAR-class submarine HMS Turbulent has recently returned from a record-breaking deployment, writes **Lt L.W. Pannett**.

Deployed since June last year, she has ably demonstrated the flexibility and dynamism of a modern SSN in a series of different roles and has lived up to the ethos of the Silent Service, that of "work hard, play hard".

In the ten months that she was away, the longest deployment of a modern UK SSN, she steamed over 50,000 miles, or over twice around the world, visited six ports and spent 236 of her 300 days away at sea.

During this intense period, she participated in Operation Oracle, the international war against terrorism, and Operation Telic, the campaign for the liberation of Iraq.

Turbulent's Commanding Officer, Cdr Andrew McKendrick, said: "In the last ten months, Turbulent has been from 15 degrees W longitude to 145 degrees E longitude, so we have been almost halfway around the world and back.

"The ship's company have been faced with some difficult and demanding tasks and have performed as true professionals throughout.

"We are delighted to be at home again with our friends and families who have supported us so magnificently."

Having just completed a busy period of Operational Sea Training in March last year, Turbulent sailed from her home port in June for what was to be a straightforward deployment east of Suez.

However, in the spirit of flexibility, her programme was changed at the last minute. Already well on her way to the Mediterranean, she returned to UK waters to host a Submarine Command Course or 'Perisher' as it's known, and to participate in a Joint Maritime Course (JMC) with several units from many countries.

For three weeks the boat was put through her paces, giving the four Perisher students, including the first US Navy student, the maximum opportunity to prove themselves.

On completion of the JMC, the boat exercised with the impressive and highly capable Seawolf-class American submarine, USS Connecticut.

Returning to her original deployment in Operation Oracle, Turbulent passed through the Straits of Gibraltar and to Souda Bay in Crete for a well-earned break.

After this brief stand-down period, she continued on her journey through the Suez Canal and into the Arabian Sea.

Lincoln, George Washington, Kitty Hawk and Constellation.

At the beginning of operations, Turbulent played a role, before leaving the Gulf and quietly continuing her journey home and was escorted northbound through the Suez Canal by HMS Northumberland.

Throughout this busy period, most of the ship's company was constantly rotated, with some returning to the UK for training and leave on fifth watch.

At sea, there was unprecedented access to email and satellite telephone facilities, enabling frequent communication with families at home.

Socially the Combined Services Entertainment organisation provided the ship's company with a music and dance show in Guam, and many took part in a myriad of sports during the various stopovers.

This included a three-day diving course, a sailing expedition along the coast of Malaysia, football matches in many locations and a rugby match in central Singapore.

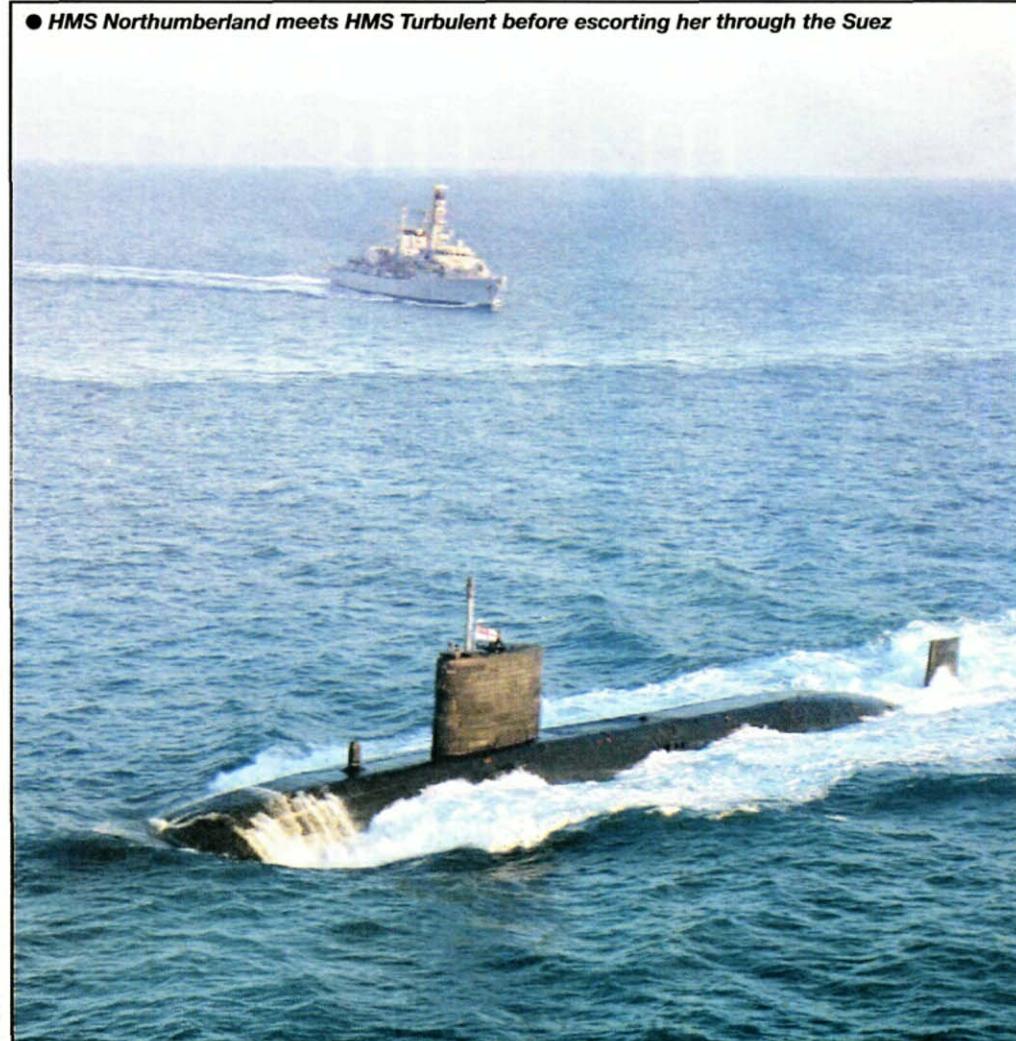
Many of the ship's company underwent a traditional and memorable 'crossing the line' ceremony in Diego Garcia with a barbecue, refreshments and games on the picturesque sandy beaches of the island.



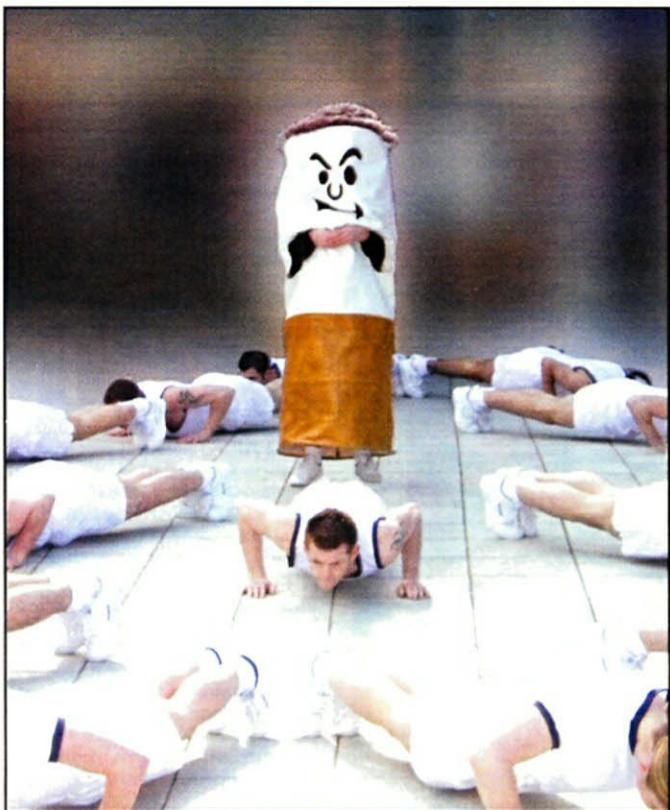
● Cdr Andrew McKendrick, Commanding Officer of HMS Turbulent, on the bridge



● Members of the Forward Marine Engineering Department on board the Trafalgar-class submarine



● HMS Northumberland meets HMS Turbulent before escorting her through the Suez



● No Smoking Day at Portsmouth saw HMS Temeraire trainee Physical Training Instructors show off the benefits of a smoke-free life

Picture: Len Finney

Goodbye to nicotine, hello to healthy life

TRAINEE Physical Training Instructors (PTIs) from establishment HMS Temeraire took part in national No Smoking Day on March 12 at Gunwharf Quays in Portsmouth.

Organised by the councils for Havant Borough, Portsmouth City, and Gosport and Fareham with the Smoking Cessation Group, the event at Gunwharf featured displays from the PTIs throughout the day showing off the health benefits of a smoke-free existence.

A stand was on hand throughout the day promoting the Navy and what the Navy is doing to support their personnel in giving up the nicotine habit.

The Navy PTI team brought some fitness equipment along with them and set a rowing challenge to other fitness instructors from the local Mountbatten Sports centre.

No surprises to hear that the Navy won!

FRIGATE HMS Iron Duke's time at Sierra Leone gave the ship a chance to rekindle old affiliations and tackle a tough building project in the West African heat.

During the ship's last visit to Freetown from October 2000 to March 2001, members of the company had assisted the staff and pupils of the Cape Community School to rebuild the premises destroyed by the civil unrest in the area.

Six of the present crew were part of that original team, and they were delighted to rope in their colleagues to go back to the school to start a new project – the building of a 70-metre long perimeter wall around the facility.

Funding for the project was raised through a charity 'horse-racing' night on board the Type 23 frigate.

As a result of this good will, some people were detailed off to track down the necessary building materials for the wall and others were sent out to start digging the foundations.

Staff and pupils from the school also pitched in to help and the wall soon started to take shape.

It took two weeks, 40 volunteers and lots of hard work, but the wall was completed on time for a grand opening ceremony on Friday March 28.

To mark the occasion



● The wall-building team from HMS Iron Duke and the Cape Community School in Sierra Leone

Commanding Officer Cdr Phil Warwick presented photographs to the school's headmaster in a ceremony which was also attended by the Deputy British High Commissioner.

Cdr Warwick said: "I am delighted that my ship's company has been able to continue the good work in support of the school.

"The wall is a very positive contribution and those involved have enjoyed working with staff and pupils on this project."

Thirty staff and pupils were welcomed on to the warship for a party on board – that included the exotic luxuries of jelly and ice-cream – and a ship's tour.

HMS Iron Duke arrived off Freetown, Sierra Leone, in early March, demonstrating the UK's commitment to aid the peace process in the West African country.

During her time in the area the frigate patrolled off the coast of the country, in addition to two visits to Freetown and conducting a good deal of joint and combined training with the Republic of Sierra Leone's Armed Forces.

Iron Duke has since crossed the Atlantic and has now resumed her counter-drugs operations in the Caribbean.

Head to head for rival navies

THE ROYAL Navy took on the Merchant Navy at a presentation competition between the cadets from the South Tyneside Maritime College and the Northumbria University Royal Naval Unit (URNU).

Cadets from each establishment met at HMS Calliope in Newcastle to compete for a prize of £1,200 supplied by the Nautical Institute.

The evening started with a presentation called 'The role of the RFA' given by the Merchant Navy's contender Third Officer Robert Burton of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

Hon Midshipman Andy Haywood countered with 'Naval air power – the past, present and future' that even featured cameos from *Top Gun's* Maverick.

The quality of the presentations was so high that in the end the Nautical Institute's panel of judges could not decide between them, and the competition was declared a tie.

Warrant officers called to update

THIS year the annual conference for Royal Navy and Marine Warrant Officers is scheduled to take place at HMS Collingwood on June 2-3.

The aim of the event is to update personnel on current and developing Naval issues, with an overarching theme of 'Manning and Retention'.

All serving WOs are invited to attend along with those Charge Chiefs and Chief Petty Officers selected for promotion.

The closing date for applications is May 5. Precise details can be found in RNTM 62/03.

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People in the News

Somerset has sharp shooter

IN early April OM(AW)2 Terri Simms of HMS Somerset became the first person in over a decade to sink a towed target with a manual 30mm gun, it is believed.

Somerset was on a five-day trial to test the modification to the 30mm guns currently found on Type 23s and MCMVs.

Competition ensued between the remote firing position down in the Ops Room and the local aimers firing from the unit itself.

At aged 18, Terri achieved no mean feat – and proved the worth of the gunners firing from the local position.

IT MAY be hot in the Gulf but it's even hotter in 3C Port, HMS Ark Royal's laundry – and Wai Kwong Lau's team from Worldwide Laundry Service have done a fantastic job keeping the clothes of the 1,100 personnel embarked on the carrier clean and back into their lockers fresh and bright in just 24-hours turnaround.

• Back: Wai Kwong Lau (Jacky); centre: Min Bahadur Ganchhaki, Krishna Thapa, Wood Mum Chan (Raymond); front: Wai Lam Lau (William), Long Yong Ng (Ken), Chhatra Rai, Dob Bahadur Galami

Picture: Sean Clee



LT CDR Kev Mathieson, Commanding Officer of 824 Squadron, has reached his 4,000 flying hours.

The numbers tally up from a variety of aircraft: 2,000 hours in the Sea King Mk 2, 5 and 6; 1,000 hours in the Gazelle HT2; 500 hours in the Seahawk SH-60F while on exchange with the US Navy; and 500 hours in the Merlin.

As CO of 824 Squadron, Lt Cdr Mathieson is responsible for aircrew and engineering training for the Merlin Mk1.



Ginge chooses the high life

HABITS are the most awkward things – easy to pick up and difficult to shake off.

For Leading Diver Ginge Fullen, his habit is tougher than most since Ginge is now

in the process of climbing the highest peaks in each country in Africa.

To date Ginge has triumphed in 51 of the 53 countries on the African continent, and his attempts on Chad and Libya have had to be put on hold due to his recall from the Reserves to serve in the Gulf.

While for some countries the highest peak was as low as Gambia's 53 metres, this was no walk in the African game-park for others required technical climbs over dramatic rockfaces.

But other dangers than falls threatened Ginge's travels, land mines and armed bandits not least among his obstacles.

Indeed Ginge's efforts are intended to raise awareness of the British Mine Advisory Group that works to clear the world of these hidden terrors.

Ginge said: "It's been brilliant. I hope to finish Africa by February next year. And should I survive Africa I'll be off again." But Ginge remains tight-lipped about his plans for his next exploits.

This follows on from his record-breaking efforts to climb the highest peaks in the 47 countries in Europe.

Within the strict rules of country definitions, this included the highest point in the Vatican City – which happened to be a helicopter platform 76ft off the ground.



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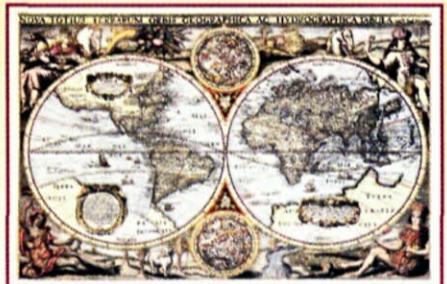
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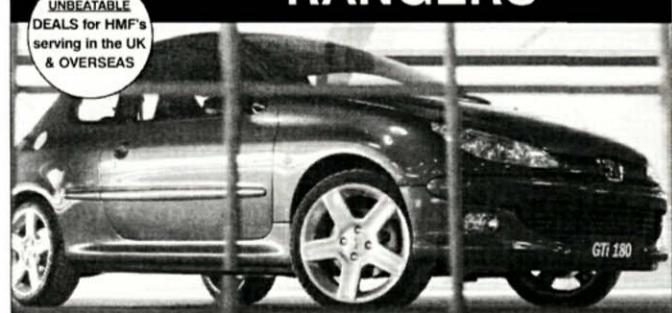
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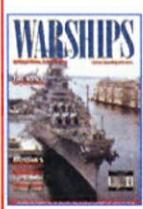
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As close
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get, lads

A CHANCE to hold the coveted FA Cup came for a team of sailors from HMS Grafton during a VIP tour of Anfield, the home of Liverpool Football Club.

Frigate HMS Grafton visited the city in early March, and the Merseyside area is home to a larger than average percentage of the ship's company.

Included in those with Liverpool connections is commanding officer Cdr Richard Thomas, who celebrated his birthday as the ship came alongside.

The Type 23 welcomed a number of visitors on board from local schools and featured heavily in the local media.

HMS Grafton had better get used to the limelight – she is going to be star of the new Naval drama series *Making Waves* under the pseudonym HMS Suffolk.

News in brief

■ THE Warrant Officers and Senior Rates Mess at HMS Collingwood, Maritime Warfare School, welcomed two special guests when Bill Williams, aged 93, and his son Ron paid a call.

Bill's brother-in-law and Ron's uncle was Alfred Sephton VC, whose name is carried on one of the new Senior Rates accommodation blocks at the Fareham base.

PO Alfred Sephton received his Victoria Cross during World War II when his ship HMS Coventry was attacked by German dive-bombers and he stayed at his post despite being mortally wounded.

■ FORMER Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Peter Spencer has been named as the new leader of the Defence Procurement Agency.

On making the announcement Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon said: "As current events in Iraq show providing our Armed Forces with the right equipment is critically important."

■ THE YOUNGEST rating at the Met School, Naval Airman Aaron Pook, let loose a weather balloon to mark the final closure of the Meteorology School from its Cornish home at RNAS Culdrose.

Aaron was joined by the Director of Naval Surveying, Oceanography and Meteorology Cdr Charles Stevenson and more than 100 current and former staff and students of the Met School.

The school has now moved to its new Plymouth home.

■ HMS COLLINGWOOD played host to the White Ensign Association (WEA) when they held their annual Executive Board meeting.

The WEA offers advice on financial and resettlement matters to both present and past members of the Royal Navy and Marines.

The visit to the Maritime Warfare School gave members of the WEA a chance to see the modern Navy.

■ LINKS between France and the UK are being kept alive at RNAS Yeovilton.

Captain Olivier Casenave-Péré, Commandant of Yeovilton's twinned French Naval Air Station Ban Lanvoc-Poulmic, brought a small team over to visit in a Super Frelon aircraft to establish common areas to develop cooperation.

The aim of the twinning is to develop full cooperation between the two air stations to gain a mutual understanding that will help both units operate together.

■ WHILE serving on my Colonel Templer with the Fleet Electronic Warfare Support Group AB Mariam Moollan RNR came across a long-lost cousin.

As the team chatted over dinner with the crew Mariam discussed her home-life on the Isle of Lewis, the same place as Alistair Macleod.

After a few minutes it became clear that the two were in fact related and spent the rest of dinner catching up with family history.

Mariam is serving with RNR HMS President in London.

■ GEMS awards at HMS Raleigh produced an impressive cash handout for two Naval men.

The awards recognise ideas that improve the organisation, management or delivery of services by the Ministry of Defence.

CCWEA Paul Hancock and CPOWEA Sid Evans both benefited to the tune of £1,000, while Shaun Kemp in Technical Services received £250 and £25 to Mark Kaminski in the Stores Department.

■ CHILDREN from Pipit Pre-School in Portsmouth stopped the traffic as they walked in grand parade from their old premises to their new home in Finch Road.

Pipit is one of eight Pre-Schools and two creches in the Naval Under Fives Organisation run for Forces and civilian children.

For more information contact Carole Eley on 023 9258 0515.

People in the News



Alan's quick work slows blood loss

QUICK-THINKING sailor Alan Priest has received a commendation from the Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral James Burnell-Nugent.

Alan's prompt action saved a fellow sailor from potentially fatal blood-loss. The incident happened while both were undergoing basic training at HMS Raleigh.

Alan said: "We received the pipe down and were all settling down for the night on our mess deck when the others began training my mess mate with pillows.

"He got a bit worked up about the pillow fight and accidentally put his fist through a safety glass window in a door.

"At first he didn't realise what had happened and insisted it was just a scratch. But I noticed immediately he was bleeding severely from a deep cut below the elbow and emergency action was needed, or he'd be in trouble."

Alan took charge and applied indirect pressure to his friend's arm and told him to hold his arm above his head to slow the bleeding. By the time RN medical staff arrived at the scene, the casualty's blood loss had slowed but he had already lost three pints of blood and was later treated in hospital.

Alan is now at the Defence Medical Services Training Centre at Aldershot training as a Medical Assistant.

Nobby boasts US SWO title

THE TITLE of Surface Warfare Officer is hard won in the US Navy after intensive study and dedication, but one Royal Navy man Lt Cdr Nobby Hall can boast the epithet.

Nobby, now based at the British Forces HQ Cyprus, won the mark of recognition when he served on a US ship during an exchange on a Gulf deployment. The US Captain was so impressed by Nobby's performance when he stood watch as a Tactical Action Officer that he dubbed him an honorary SWO.

US Navy SWO Lt J.G. Coon said: "The world knows the traditions of most Navies across the globe can be traced back to the British. They are held in the highest regard and so I am not surprised that this British officer had the knowledge to receive this distinction."

Welcome to the double-U's

The first five W ratings have qualified from the Maritime Warfare School.

The W rating replaces the three previous sub-branches of AW, UW and EW – and the W five head out to join the Fleet ready to take on any role carried out by their predecessors but with a more flexible and adaptable background.

● OM(W)2s Brakenberry, Hallam, Morris, Oldland and Russell

Picture: Dryad Phot Section



● Robbie Coltrane with (from left to right) Lt Jason Davies, POA 'Wiggy' Wigfull, Lt Sean Darwent and Lt Neil Armstrong of Gannet SAR during the filming of *The Planman*

Gannet shines as media stars

THE WINNER of the Desmond Wetter Fleet Award for 2002 is Gannet SAR (Search and Rescue) Flight.

The award is given each year to the unit that has done the most to project a positive image of the Royal Navy in the past year.

In their SAR role with their expert medics, the Prestwick-based unit has kept strong links with the local community, winning upbeat coverage in local and national media.

Their various tasks include searches, medical evacuations, and going to aid vessels such as fishing boats when needed. The unit has set up a special link direct to BBC Scotland, feeding back footage of rescues straight to the TV centre for use in news bulletins.

The small team have also capitalised on opportunities, with a number of major TV programmes over the course of the year.

The TV series *Rockface* has followed the rescue activities of the unit, as has *Special Babies* which covered the transfer of a baby from Northern Ireland to a specialist care unit in Glasgow on Christmas Day.

They have also played a starring role in dramas such as *The Planman* featuring Robbie Coltrane and the series *2,000 Acres of Sky*.

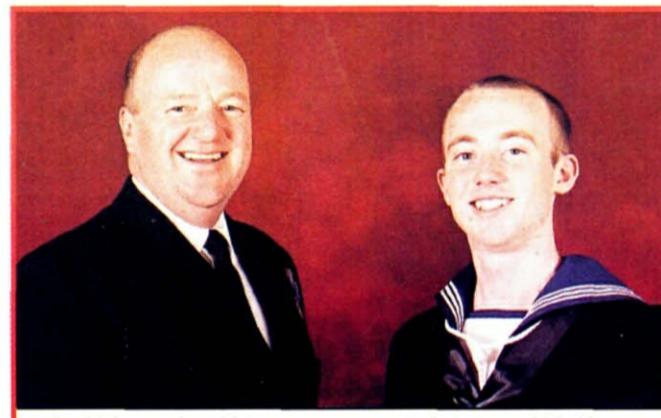
Lt Cdr Robbie Burns of Gannet said that they were surprised to receive the award, particularly against stiff competition like HMS Ark Royal.

"We don't concentrate on PR", he said, "but everybody gets involved. That's the way it generally works up here. Ideas come up

and we just run with it. We have to keep flexible in such a small unit."

Gannet is one of the smallest bases in the UK, with around 70 Service personnel at the unit, but

also one of the busiest. It covers an area that extends from Northern Ireland to the mountains of Scotland, the Western Isles to the lakes of Cumbria.



WO Richard Stockley congratulates his son OM Nicholas Stockley at his Passing Out Parade at HMS Raleigh

Nottingham award for RAN officer

AN OFFICER who led a team of Royal Australian Navy divers in helping HMS Nottingham in the first perilous hours after she was torn open on Wolfe Rock, Lord Howe Island, last July has been formally acknowledged, reports RAN Navy News.

Lt Damien Scully RAN received the Maritime Commander's Commendation.

The citation commended Lt Scully for his outstanding leadership and professionalism while commanding a detachment of clearance divers in support of the British destroyer.

Called from home late at night Lt Scully and his team gathered equipment and within hours were at RAAF Richmond and on their way to the island.

Using their salvage skills they were able to minimise further flooding of the warship by attaching plates, shoring and other sealing material.



One RAF among many RN

THE ONLY RAF officer to be based permanently with the Navy at HMS Naval Base Clyde is Group Captain Jane Nottingham.

Not only does she stand out from her Naval colleagues, she is exceptional in the RAF – the first female dentist to reach the rank of Group Captain.

Jane holds the tri-Service post of Principal Dental Officer (Scotland) at the Faslane base, responsible for all the military dental centres over the Scottish border that care for over 13,500 military personnel.

● Lt Gareth Wragg welcomes RAF dentist Group Captain Jane Nottingham to HMS Triumph on FOST

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Gunfire support was too close for comfort

HAVING spent the preceding weeks conducting boarding operations in support of UN sanctions, HMS Richmond went to action station during the first phase of operations in the Northern Arabian Gulf, writes *Surg Lt Chris MacLean*

As she moved to a pre-determined position to provide Naval Gunfire Support (along with HMS Chatham and Marlborough) for the Royal Marines in their assault on the Al Faw peninsula, Principal Warfare Officer Lt Cdr Don MacKinnon alerted the ship's company to a missile launch against the coalition force assembling there.

This landed harmlessly in the sea and we did not have to use any of our anti-missile protection systems.

The task of closing the Iraqi coast involved concerted effort on the part of the navigation team, in conjunction with the sonar operators in the operations room, who were looking out for mines.

The Navigator, Lt Marcus Hember, had to keep a very close eye on our progress, as HMS Richmond's draught is over seven metres and the depth of water in the littoral waters provided very little clearance.

The ship's position was in the Kawr' Abd Allah waterway, which forms the broad estuary from the strategic port of Umm Qasr. She remained here for some 48 hours, keeping her 4.5in gun ready for immediate action.

This task was extremely difficult and one of the most demanding the bridge team has ever had to perform as, in addition to the navigational hazards posed by the area being poorly charted and extremely shallow, they also had to avoid underwater hazards such as an oil pipeline and contend with strong currents.

As the ship was within five miles of the Iraqi coast she was at risk from land launched missiles and shore based artillery.

Further threats were posed by

the possibility of attacks by Iraqi patrol boats or defensive mining operations that were yet to be cleared as the Richmond was operating ahead of the UK mine countermeasures vessels.

It was necessary to disperse non-essential personnel onto 1 Deck and above. This precaution was taken to ensure that as many of the Ship's Company as possible were above the waterline lest the ship fell victim to a mine.

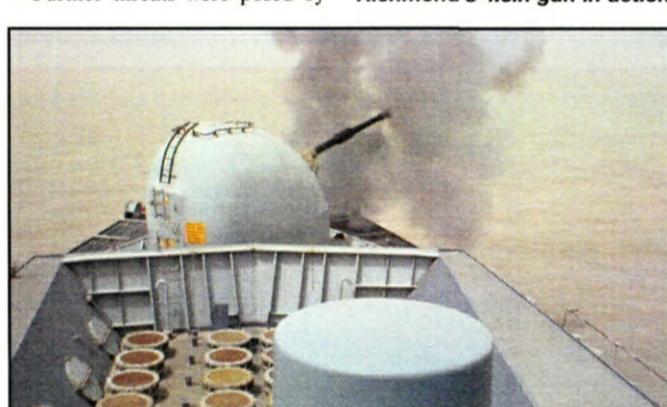
In view of the potential threat from chemical and biological weapons, it was also necessary for the Ship Protection Officers to close up in the Ship's Control Centre in order to monitor the systems capable of detecting such an attack. As the offensive continued, HMS Richmond was able to 'multi-task' – in addition to providing highly effective gunfire support, she gave force protection to other warships in the vicinity.

This was provided by the embarked Royal Marine contingent from the Fleet Protection Group, with continuously manned jetpac-boats.

HMS Richmond's highly effective gunnery, coupled with that from the other three ships on the 'Gunline', was able to neutralise Iraqi military targets with the minimum number of rounds, ensuring that the shore infrastructure and civilians remained safe.

□ The MOD has ordered seven more 4.5in Mark 8 Mod 1 guns – more reliable, easier to load and simpler to install than the earlier Mod 0 pattern – from BAE systems.

● **ECONOMIC FIRE: HMS Richmond's 4.5in gun in action**



Helo assault biggest since Vietnam War

ON the night of 20 March 845 Squadron NAS from HMS Ocean led the largest helicopter-borne assault since the Vietnam War.

It headed a force that included nine Sea King 4s, five Chinooks from 18 Sqn RAF and eight USAF MH53 Pavelows, as well as supporting USAF fixed wing assets.

The night insertion of 40 Cdo Royal Marines to secure the oil infrastructure on the Al Faw peninsula in Southern Iraq was of strategic importance and was among the first coalition actions of the war.

Said a spokesman for 845 Sqn: "All objectives were achieved with no loss of life, in weather that was far from perfect, and under fire from the enemy."

"Every member of the Squadron is proud of what we achieved that night, and it will go down in its history as one of its most notable operations in recent years."

Since then 845 Sqn had been flying intensively by both day and night in support of the Royal Marines.



● **WORKING TOGETHER: HMS Sandown in mine clearance operations off the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr while an Australian Seaking helicopter patrols overhead**

Camouflaged mines found in secret store

UNITED Kingdom, US and Australian coalition forces were involved in a massive operation to sweep the shallow waters leading into the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr.

Early on two tugs and a barge carrying more than 100 mines – some hidden in a secret compartment from where they could be launched into the sea unnoticed – were seized.

Oil drums had been used to camouflage mines laid out on the decks.

The threat to shipping from mines delayed the arrival of humanitarian aid delivered by HMS Galahad. Ten mine countermeasures vessels – six UK ships and four US – worked round the clock to clear the waterways, supported by RFA Sir Bedivere.

The British MCMVs were HMS Sandown, Brocklesby, Bangor, Blyth, Ledbury and Grimsby, led by Cdr Charlie Wilson.

Checks were also made on the wharves as coalition helicopters flew over the squadron, two of the MCMVs steaming ahead of the main group mapping all the contacts for the second wave to clear.

Divers from the Fleet Diving Group were operating in Umm Qasr itself along with other coalition divers to clear the port area, sweeping and checking the jetties.

They were working in arduous conditions. Not only did they have to battle with poor weather and visibility, but they were also searching through four metres of silt.

Mines were found along the river edge leading to Umm Qasr.

The US Navy was also using highly trained dolphins to search for mines using their highly developed sonar skills.

Said the mine countermeasures adviser to the Maritime Component Commander Lt Cdr David Hunkin: "The task proved very difficult because of the high

tidal streams, nil visibility and poor weather. But we have a world leading team here – there are no better experts on the job and there is no better kit that you could buy anywhere to assist them in doing the job."

RFA Sir Galahad was eventually brought in with over 200 tons of aid donated by the UK and Kuwaiti governments, including bulk food such as rice, lentils and chick peas, flour, bottled water and World Health Organisation medical packs.

This was one of the largest and most capable MCM forces the Navy has deployed to conduct an operation in recent years.

Combat support boats towed an acoustic and magnetic influence sweep – a new piece of kit specially developed for shallow water operations.

Also fitted at short notice – and used for the first time – to HMS Blyth and Bangor was a 'one-shot' mine disposal system, 'Seafox' which allowed a quicker disposal of possible mine targets.

Chatham turns back Iraqi 'fleet'

EARLY on in the campaign what was left of Saddam Hussein's navy was prevented from entering the Persian Gulf after a quick manoeuvre by HMS Chatham.

The Type 22 frigate – which became the first British ship in 21 years to bombard a land target – was called into action just before dawn on March 23 after a surveillance team some miles inland spotted three Iraqi vessels leaving the area around the port of Basra.

The mini fleet, which included a training frigate believed to be the biggest ship in the Iraqi Navy apart from the presidential yacht, was spotted on the Shatt A'Arab river, which marks the border with Iran.

The frigate was flanked by a 220ft Osa-class patrol boat with a powerful gun and missile stocks and a fast Bogomol patrol boat.

Allied commanders feared that the vessels could be planning a last ditch attack on the Naval Task Force or that senior members of Saddam's regime could have been making a desperate bid to escape in the face of the fast moving Allied invasion.

HMS Chatham, the RN ship closest to the Iraqi shore, moved fast to cover the mouth of the river. She was supported by the Australian frigate HMAS Darwin and three helicopters and the three Iraqi vessels did not dare venture out into the sea.

One of them, the Bogomol, was left crippled in the river after the Chatham called an air strike by an RAF Tornado.

Chatham's CO, Capt the Hon Michael Cochrane, said: "There was a fear that the Iraqis could come out for some sort of do-or-die mission and it was my job to take whatever measures were necessary to ensure the safety of our ships."

Chatham was chosen as the floating headquarters of the American-planned 'Psychological Operations' division. This broadcasted programmes dubbed 'Radio Free Iraq' – a mix of modern Middle Eastern music interspersed with messages of peace and warnings that the Allies would use extreme force against those who did not surrender.



HMS MONMOUTH – aka 'The Black Duke' – has returned to her home port of Devonport following a 15-month £20 million refit at Rosyth dockyard in Scotland.

During the refit, carried out by Babcock BES and the Warship Support Agency, the Type 23 frigate has had a number of key upgrades. These include improvements to her communications systems and conversion to allow her to embark the Royal Navy's new Merlin helicopter.

The Merlin HM Mk1 is a replacement for the anti-submarine Sea King HAS Mk6 and is designed to operate from both large and small ships' flight decks, in severe weather and high sea states, by day and night.

HMS Monmouth has also been fitted with the new 4.5in Mod 1 Gun, the latest evolution of the tried and tested 4.5 Mod 0 Gun which has been in service with the Royal Navy since the early 1970s.

The upgrade is part of the gradual introduction of the new gun into the RN. HMS Monmouth's sister ship, HMS Norfolk, was the first of the Type 23 frigates to be fitted with it in 2001.

During the latter stages of her refit, HMS Monmouth deployed over 60 personnel to firefighting duties in Operation Fresco. Her rededication ceremony will be held at Devonport on July 18.

• HMS Monmouth leaves Rosyth at the end of her refit

New tanker in service

First of two new diesel-electric powered tankers which will be used to supply Royal Navy warships with fuel and stores at sea worldwide has entered service.

The 31,000 tonne auxiliary oiler Wave Knight was accepted into service with the Royal Fleet Auxiliary at a ceremony at her base in Devonport.

Said First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Alan West: "Everyone who has been working on this project is extremely happy that RFA Wave Knight has now been successfully brought into service. Her sister ship, Wave Ruler, is expected to enter service shortly, and together they will support the Royal Navy in its world-wide operations."

As well as being able to transport up to 16,000 tonnes of fuel, RFA Wave Knight can also carry almost 400 tonnes of fresh water and 150 tonnes of food in refrigerated containers.

She has been constructed with a double hull to keep the risk of pollution to a minimum in case of damage.

Each of the ships has a hangar and flight deck large enough to take a Merlin helicopter. Crew is 80 RFA personnel and about 20 RN.



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Through fire and flood, Glasgow is back at sea

AFTER 12 months alongside in Portsmouth Naval Base, Type 42 HMS Glasgow is back at sea. Originally the destroyer arrived in Portsmouth in March 2002 expecting to start her six-month docking period for essential maintenance but this was subsequently delayed and Glasgow was placed at extended notice awaiting a suitable opportunity for work to commence.

However when sister ship HMS Nottingham ran aground and flooded off Australia last year, Glasgow was the natural choice to take her place in the Fleet and plans were drawn up to get her back to sea at the earliest opportunity.

An intensive two months in dry-dock followed with the crew and staff from FSL working 16-hour days to make sure the warship was structurally sound and ready for her return to sea.

But during this period the ship was nominated for Operation Fresco duties, providing emergency cover during the firefighters' pay dispute. This meant that 50 per cent of the company were sent to RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall to undergo firefighting training.

Despite this serious reduction in manpower, Glasgow's docking period was completed on time, but unable to sail with only half a crew, Glasgow remained alongside with more of her number being drafted to help in the fire strike.

In the intervals between strikes Glasgow readied herself for her return but as each anticipated sailing date approached, frustratingly newly-announced strikes forced cancellation time and again.

Finally circumstances came good and on March 29 HMS Glasgow proudly pulled away from her berth and returned to sea.

Reservists called to southern celebration

THE SHOUT has gone out from Brighton to Southampton for the Navy's Reservists to celebrate their centenary at a service at Portsmouth's Anglican Cathedral on Friday May 9.

This centenary year sees a large number of part-time volunteers called up to serve in the Arabian Gulf alongside their regular counterparts in the coalition force engaged in the action in Iraq.

They are following in their predecessors' footsteps to the Reservists' mobilisation centre at HMS King Alfred in Portsmouth.

Former Reservists and their families are welcome to attend the special ecumenical thanksgiving service at the cathedral which is due to start at 5.30pm.

Any RNR or RNVR veterans, particularly those who served in the southern area, who wish to attend the service should contact HMS King Alfred on 023 9254 7453 for further details.



On the Making Waves set: Cdr Tony Rix, head of PR for the Navy, Ted Childs, the executive producer from Carlton TV, and lead actor Alex Ferns as Cdr Martin Brooke

Picture: Tony Nutley, Carlton

Villain turns to hero in Navy drama

THE DASHING captain at the helm of fictional Type 23 HMS Suffolk is Cdr Martin Brooke, played by actor Alex Ferns who in a former life was *Eastenders* baddie Trevor. Filming has begun at Portsmouth Naval Base for the new drama series *Making Waves*.

Alex is not the only one changing roles, for the real HMS Grafton has been transformed into the televisual HMS Suffolk to act as the centrepiece for the filming.

Name plates and funnel badges have been changed throughout the ship, and now 'Suffolk' proudly displays her battle honours on a specially-created board.

Attention to detail has been a priority for the Carlton TV crew that are making the new drama series. Cdr Brooke is a former Sea Harrier pilot and actor Alex was whisked down to Yeovilton to see the real thing for photos for his cabin walls.

Alongside the photos hangs a child's painting with the crayoned warship marked with the designated pennant number of F88, in real life once carried by HMS Broadsword.

After a long deployment that lasted until the closing months of last year, HMS Grafton is providing the filming platform during her harmony period alongside her home port.

While the film crew set up bright lights and call action, the ship's crew are still hard at work training and keeping the ship fully operational for any potential deployment at the end of June.

The costs of the changes and transformation are being carried entirely by Carlton TV, along with any running costs racked up during the programme – not inconsiderable when you consider the costs of taking a Type 23 to sea.

Viewers with Naval knowledge watching the finished series may be surprised by the eventful life of this particular frigate, but the drama series will have to live up to its name, and dramatic twists and turns will keep the TV audience hooked to their screens.

FEDO diary dates

FEDOS WILL be visiting HM Ships Severn, Southampton, Campbeltown and Sutherland in May and June.

Personnel can register using the Enhanced Learning Credit forms available on the ships.

For more information contact Lt Cdr Griffiths on (military dial) 9380 20698.

Artificers centenary heralded at Sultan

AS PART of a series of events arranged by the Fisgard Association, HMS Sultan played host to a group of around 70 former Marine and Air Engineering Artificer Apprentices to mark the centenary of the first 'Tiffies' joining the Navy.

After an introductory welcome to the establishment the group was split into their respective specialisations and given a tour of the modern world of the Artificer Apprentice.

CPO Mick McNally, the visit organiser, said: "The whole visit was such a privilege to arrange – especially seeing people's faces as they discovered old friends."

The Fisgard Association began in 1996 and since that date the numbers have swollen to around 1,300. The Association is keen to have serving Artificers and Apprentices in their midst.

British at the helm of NATO Force

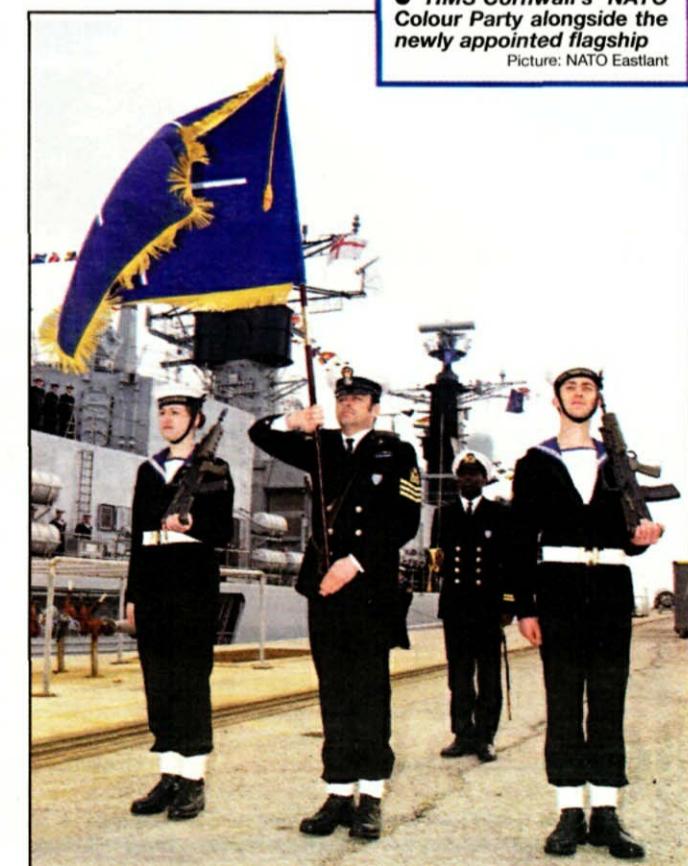
THE SPANISH port of Rota saw the formal change in command ceremony for the Standing Naval Force Atlantic when Cdr Richard Ibbotson of the Royal Navy took over from his Spanish counterpart Rear Admiral Manuel Otero.

This means that dastardly deeds will be portrayed, but Carlton TV has agreed that the programme will also show how the Navy really responds to problems and sets its world in order.

Lt Cdr Kevin Fincher is the main man linking the two different worlds of TV production and the military.

He said: "One of the remits that has been given to me is to make sure that not only is it entertaining for the great British public, but it is true to the Navy and their families in the way that life is depicted."

With the care and attention that is being lavished on this programme by Carlton TV under the lead of executive producer Ted Childs, whose impressive credentials include *Morse*, *Soldier Soldier* and *Sharpe*, it looks like this drama will have the status 'not to be missed'.



● HMS Cornwall's NATO Colour Party alongside the newly appointed flagship

Picture: NATO Eastland



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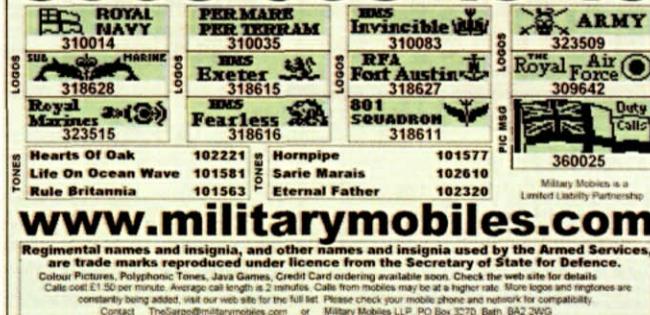
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Reunions

May

HMS Widmerpool Bay 1944-57: The next reunion is on May 16-17 at Angel Hotel, Royal Leamington Spa. Contact Bob (Topsy) Turner, 17 Mill Way, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 4DD, tel: 01342 323801.

HMS Antelope's annual reunion at the China Fleet Club in Saltash on May 31. All ex-Antelopes are welcome. Contact Bob Hutton, 3 Agars Plough, Eton, Windsor SL4 6HR, or email: bobahutton@hotmail.com.

WOSA-ex-WOSA FCPCSA annual reunion dinner, May 16, at WO & SR Mess, HMS Raleigh; details from WO Dave Paterson, Ceres Squadron, HMS Raleigh, Torpoint PL11 2PD, tel 01752 811512.

June

HMS Nightjar (Inskip): Ex-Wrens are invited to our annual 'do' from June 1 to 5 at St Ives Hotel, St Anne's. Contact Margaret Johnson, 116 Headroom Rd, St Anne's on Sea, Lancs FY8 3BG, tel: 01253 729813.

HMS Hampshire (D06) reunion on June 7 at the Nautical Club, Birmingham, commencing 1930. There will be a small charge for the buffet. Contact Ray Crawford at 8 The Orchard, Townfield Lane, Barnton, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 4LT, tel: 01606 77648 or email: ray.crawford@orange.net.

HMS Glorious, Ardent & Asta: A memorial service is to take place at St Nicholas Church, HMS Drake, Devonport, on June 8. Details from David Woodcock, 15 Green Lane, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria LA15 8LZ, tel: 01229 462385.

HMS Constance, 8th Destroyer Flotilla: All hands 1945-56. Far Eastern Commissions muster at RNA, Leamington Spa on June 14. Up spirits at 1100. Details: Ken Upsdale on 01795 665248.

RN PT Branch reunion on June 20. Golf at Southwick Park from 0800, football match from 1430, possible ships visit and Dinner from 1930 at the Home Club. More details from CPOPT Tiny Nash on 023 92725552 or Lt Cdr Dave Ward on 023 9272 5554.

July

Nuclear Chief of the Watch (NCOW) Past and Present: Sixth Annual Seminar and Dinner will take place in the WO and SR Mess, HMS Drake, on July 10. Details from WO George Neder on 01752 557649, WO Mark Close on 01752 555787 or CCMEA John Richards on 01752 555559.

RN Supply Officers' cocktail party and buffet supper: For serving and retired SOs and partners in HMS Nelson, on July 18. Cost: £20 per person. Closing date: June 16. Contact: Lt Cdr Kerwood, 023 9272 4293.

HMS Unicorn Association 42-54: Reunion at the Esplanade Hotel, Llandudno, July 27 to 31. Details from E. Bosworth, 3 Arundel Close, Hensol Hempstead, Herts HP2 4QR or email: Unicorn@freenet.ws

August

Portsmouth Field Gunners Association: Annual family reunion BBQ at HMS Excellent, GI's Association on August 3 from 1300-1800. On August 16-17 there is a reunion trip to the Isle of Wight. Contact Pete Ruck, 148 Highland Road, Southsea PO4 9NH, tel: 023 9261 4947 or email: peters.catering@virgin.net

HMS Actaeon, South Atlantic 1946-53: The fifth annual reunion at Leicester Senior Service Club August 8 to 10. Ship's Company contact George (Ginger) Brandon on 0116 267 3755.

HMS St Brides Bay 1959-60: Wardroom reunion on August 10 near Exeter. Contact Charles Fremantle, Langley Corner, Langley Burrell, Chippenham SN15 4L, tel: 01249 652171 or email: Cfremantle@aol.com

HMS Suffolk Association reunion at The Bay View Court Hotel, Bournemouth (01202 294449) August 29 to 31. Send SAE to A.E. Emmanuel, 1 Channon Court, 136 Maple Road, Surbiton KT6 4RS.

HMS Ceres (Wetherby 1946-58): The third reunion takes place at the Crown Hotel, Harrogate, North Yorkshire from August 29 to 31. Contact Richard Knight, 41 Glenfield Ave, Wetherby LS22 6RN, tel: 01937 581409.

HMS Dauntless Reunion: A luncheon celebrating the 50th anniversary of the commissioning of HMS Dauntless, training base of the Wrens, will be held at the Victory Services Club on August 30, followed by a small race party at Roseberry Hall. All Wrens who joined between Dec 1953 and Aug 1981 are welcome. Call 07811 850859, email: hms.dauntless@ntworld.com or see <http://homepage.ntworld.com/m.wrigley2>

September

HMS Porlock Bay Association 1946-48: Annual reunion at the Grand Hotel, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1BE from September 19-22. Ex-shipmates please contact Hon Sec: K. Faulkner, 22 Clovelly Rd, Swinton, Manchester M27 0FU, tel: 0161 794 8962.

Boom Defence Ratings: The next 'Boomers' convention will take place on September 19 at Scarborough. Contact Alf Memberon on 01302 811898 or Lance Hollingsworth on 01723 369798.

HMS Euryalus Association: Grand Bicentenary Celebration reunion at the Home Club, Portsmouth on September 23. All ranks of all commissions welcome. Details from Eric Owen, 82 Heath Park Drive, Cardiff CF14 3QL, tel: 029 2075 0022.

HMS Duff Reunion is at Solihull on September 27-28. Contact N. Johns, The Old Chardery, New Road, Instow, Bideford, Devon EX39 4LN, tel: 01271 860578.

HMS Boxer reunion at the Plymouth Royal Fleet Club on September 27. Focus around the 1988 Gulf trip, but all Boxers are welcome. £10 covers room booking, light buffet and disco. For those arriving on September 26 there is an informal gathering in the bar opposite the PR on Union Street from 1900. Contact Richard Gough on 07973 688648 or email: richard@gough.net or via website: www.rgough.com/boxer

HMS Crane U23/F123 (1943-62)

Navy News on tape

Navy News is available free of charge on tape from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. For details, contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact phone number. No special equipment is required to play the tapes, which are standard 90-minute cassettes.

Association: Reunion and AGM at the Nottingham Gateway Hotel from September 26 to 28. Details from Membership Secretary, Tony Nuttall, 85 Conway Road, Carlton, Nottingham NG4 2PW, tel: 0115 9526363 or email: cranesnest@ntworld.com

14th Carrier Air Group Association: Reunion at the RNA Club, Leamington Spa on September 27. All who served with 804 and 812 NASs in HM Ships Glory, Ocean and Theseus are invited. Details from Ken Lambert, 17 Walgrave, Orton Malbourn, Peterborough PE2 5NR, tel: 01733 234655.

October

HMS Caprice (World Cruise 1968) Association: Reunion at Thames Hotel, Maidenhead, Berkshire on October 4. Contact Phil Evans, 68 Leicester Road, Farnworth, Manchester M35 0QY, tel: 0161 681 9044 or email: phil.w.evans@virgin.net

RN PTI Branch, North Command: Reunion luncheon on October 5 at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham. Details from Orlando Jemmett on 01227 263691.

HMS Tiger: Reunion and AGM will take place at the Trecarn Hotel, Babacombe, Torquay from October 3 to 6. Contact Dennis Andrews on 013 8883 2672 or email: bjoy@virgin.net

Castle-Class Corvette (Frigate) Association: Reunion at The Royal Pier Hotel, Sandown, Isle of Wight from October 3-6. All commissions, ranks and rates welcome. Details of reunion and association from Mike Biffen (Secretary), 81 Beakes Road, Smethwick, West Midlands B67 5RS, tel: 0121 429 3895.

HMS Plymouth Association reunion will be held on October 4. Lunch time onboard at East Float Dock, Birkenhead. Evening at Police HQ Liverpool. Details of reunion and membership can be obtained by contacting Martin Slater, 44 Argo Road, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 0NW, tel: 0151 286 6992 or email: martin@marjack44.freescrve.co.uk

HMS Bruce Association Annual Reunion at Ambassador Hotel, Scarborough from October 7 to 9. All members and their partners are cordially invited. Details from the Secretary on 0121 532 4058.

The German Scharnhorst Association will commemorate the 60th anniversary of the sinking of the battleship in 1943. The reunion takes place in Wilhelmshaven from October 9 to 12. Members of the Bordkameradschaft Scharnhorst would be pleased to welcome all British veterans of the Battle of North Cape, both RN and Merchant

Navy to this, their final meeting. Details from John Wass on 0115 966 3314.

RNPSA Reunion: This year's reunion has been amended and now takes place on October 10 and 11 at the Ocean Rooms, Gorleston. Contact Hedley Crago on 01442 241217 or email: bighed@btinternet.com

HMS Daring (1952-54): Reunion at Holme Lacey Hotel, Hereford, October 10-13. Details: Owen Simpson, 20 Green Close, Uley, Glos GL11 5TH, tel: 01453 860564, email: owensimpson@tinyonline.co.uk

HMS Sheffield Association: The next reunion is from October 10 to 13 at the Trecarn Hotel, Babacombe. Details from the new General Secretary, Gordon Buttress at 64 Green Lane, Coshill B64 3LU, tel: 01675 463614.

Sussex Division RNVR & RNR: To commemorate the centenary of the RNVR & RNR in Sussex, a service of commemoration has been arranged in the Chapel of Lancing College at 1500 on October 12. Anyone wishing to attend should contact SANO, 5 Plainfields Avenue, Brighton BN1 8RJ, tel: 01273 555644 or see: www.sussexnavy.org

All Ship's Associations: A showcase weekend takes place at the Inglenook Hotel, Torquay from October 17-20. Two Members and wives are invited to attend from each Ship. Price for the three days is £47 per person. Telephone 01803 293800 for details.

HMS Morecambe Bay Reunion October 24-26 on the Isle of Wight. Contact Doug Turk on 01252 664694 or email: doug.turk@ntworld.com

HMS Triumph Reunion: all commissions welcome, October 24-27 at the Auckland Hotel, Morecambe. Contact Eric Buckner on 01228 510534.

Survey Ships Association ninth reunion in Edinburgh on October 24-26. Details of reunion and membership (please send SAE) from Secretary, SSA, 20 Chalgrove Rd, Drayton, Portsmouth PO6 2ER, tel: 023 9279 1258, email: surpass@bt.com

HMS Diamond reunion October 31 to November 3 at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent. For details of the reunion and the Association, contact Ray Shipley on 01634 267084.

November

HM Ships Hecla, Venomous and Marne 1940-42: Reunion at the Ramada-Jarvis Hotel, Solihull, from November 7 to 9. Details from Norman Johns, The Old Chardery, New Rd, Instow, Bideford EX39 4LN, tel: 01271 860578.

HMS Medusa, final commission 65-66: As it's Medusa's 60th birthday next year, what about a reunion? Tug Wilson, Sid Sharp, Andy Heyman, Spud Keen, Jan Muller, Charlie Charlesworth, Jock (stoker) Sparks and others contact Eric Beechill, Belle Royal Farm, Blackshaw Head, Hebdon Bridge, W. Yorks HX7 7JP, tel: 01422 842948 or email: ericbeechill@aol.com

HMS Dido 1967-69: Fred Abraham seeks former ship's crew including Sam Barnes, 'Dutch' Hollands, Henry Cannell, Lt Harrison, PO Newman and Captain Charles Scott. Contact Rod Jenkins, 33 Paston Ridings, Paston, Peterborough PE4 7UR, tel: 01733 751019.

HMS Royal Arthur, Skegness 1945, Stores class 190: Seeking Birch, Constable, Dempsey, Dudley, Etherington, Fahlen, Ford, Harrison, Hygall, Mortiboy, Paton, Pickles, Rathbone, Raybould, Sanderson, Saunders, Thomas, Tomkins, Walpole, Wilkes, Williamson, Willis, Zway. Contact Albert Goddard, 8 St Ann's Close, Chapel-en-le-Frith, High Peak, Derbyshire SK23 9SG.

LST 305: Jim West seeks Ted Britt or any others who survived the torpedoing. Write to Jim West, 54 Hodderway, Poulton-le-Fylde FY6 8AQ, tel: 01253 891050.

HMS Submarine Renown: 'Whisky' is seeking all starboard crew from build and first commission, especially Jasper J.R. Spy. Have contact with some but where is Pincher and Cags? Reunion in Leicester, November. Contact Kevin Walker on 01224 725527.

HMS Dido 1967-69: Fred Abraham seeks former ship's crew including Sam Barnes, 'Dutch' Hollands, Henry Cannell, Lt Harrison, PO Newman and Captain Charles Scott. Contact Rod Jenkins, 33 Paston Ridings, Paston, Peterborough PE4 7UR, tel: 01733 751019.

HMS Jamaica: Jim Hewison, former National Service ERA 4 during the Suez crisis, seeks any members of the ERAs mess at the time. Contact Jim at 6 Malthouse Lane, Ramsey, Cambs PE26 1SQ or email: james.w.hewison@btinternet.com

HMS Collingwood 1955: Ralph (Wiggy) Bennett would like to get in touch with Norman (Paddy) Beattie, last known at Ratmines, Dublin. Contact Ralph at 81 West Drive, Twintwistle, Glossop SK13 1NB, tel: 01457 854019, email: BRAPLH365@aol.com

HMS Newcastle: Paul (Brad) Bradford is seeking AB(S) Kevin Smith who served in Newcastle during the SOUTHANT tour in 1993-4. Last seen in Pompey and believed to have come from Basingstoke. If you know of Kevin or know Paul contact him at Flat 7, St James Court, Western Esplanade, Canvey Island SS9 0AY, tel: 07957 658570 or email: pabradford@ukonline.co.uk

Ex-HMS Ganges Instructor: Would like to trace any member of 19 Mess Anson Division around July 1962. Contact Instructor POAF A/E A.M. Beale, Maryfield N H, 17 Florence Rd, Bournemouth BH5 1HH, telephone: 01202 392329, or email: bealewithane@aol.com

HMS Exeter 1982: Reg (Pasty) Cornwall is seeking Mark Algar, Charlie Varley, Mo Morris, Jed Stone and anyone else who was in the Exeter during the Falklands Conflict. Contact Reg at 3 Thirlmere Close, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1ER, tel: 0161 304 7496 or email: reg1964@hotmail.com

JE16 Squad Royal Marines 1963: Seeking members of JE16 who would be interested in a reunion. There are nine on board already. Contact Paddy O'Rourke, 1 Frome Head, Ty Croes, Anglesey LL63 5RW, telephone: 01022 394855, or email: malcolmpink@btconnect.com

FOGIB and HMS Broadsway, early 80s: Dave Haydon would like to contact all ex-colleagues, except those he still owes money to a pint. Contact Dave at 7 Corrad Close, Grays Essex RM16 2TW, tel: 01375 369046, email: dave.haydon@btinternet.com

HMS Fisgard 1956 Series 27, Boy Arts: 50th Anniversary in 2006. Four who met at the Fisgard Asn Centenary Celebration are proposing that we hold a reunion in 2006. Contact Cliff Pantry on 01837 55830, email: cliff.pantry@care-free.net

Theseus touring the Far East, Australia and NZ, 1947: Seeking shipmates of Bill Grice. Contact him at 4 Newfield Close, Normanton, W. Yorks, tel: 01924 892246, email: wgrice@blueyonder.co.uk

HMS Torquay/HMS Gloucester: Mick Doyle is seeking Joe (Scouse) Horrigan.</

**Drafty**

All change in Air Arm

IN MAY 2002 readers were informed of the development of a TOPMAST Squad System (TMSS) for Able Ratings within the FAA.

One year on, we are now implementing these important changes to ensure we meet the future needs of our people whilst enhancing the delivery of

Operational Capability to our customers. The FAA TMSS will consist of three squads based at RNAS Yeovilton and Culdrose, with RAF Cottesmore and Wittering being considered as the Joint Force Harrier (JFH) squad.

The squads will be divided into manpower Communities, one for each aircraft type and one to support the other components

within the air stations, such as the Air and Executive departments.

The air station Communities will also be used to support the Air and AE departments in CVS, LPH and LPD.

Within each squad the Communities will be sub-divided into three pools; an Emergency Relief Pool to provide temporary reliefs for associated sea-going units, a Training Pool for Pre-joining Training and Consolidation, as well as a Relief Pool to enable personnel in shore-based units to undertake activities such as Adventurous Training.

Manpower for augmentation and extraneous duties will also be drawn from these pools.

A Waterfront Manning Organisation (Air) will be created at each air station to manage squad manpower, replacing the existing MACCOs, having been granted much greater authority and autonomy.

These organisations will be under the charge of Warrant Officers or Waterfront Manning Officers (WMO(Air)), with dedicated Community Manpower Co-ordinators (CMCs) for each Community.

The CMCs will be CPOAEWs who will carry out many of the functions currently undertaken by the D3 Drafting Officer for Able Ratings.

Working closely with the Force Commanders, Regional Drafting Career Advisors and Squadron Manpower Controllers, the CMC will manage the short and medium term movements of the personnel within their specific Communities (100-150 personnel).

The drafting cycle, and the

duration of drafts, will remain unchanged in the short term, being controlled by CND via the sea roster.

In the medium term, sea/shore rotation will be driven by Separated Service, which will replace the sea roster (ABs only).

To provide domestic stability, personnel will be able to bid for their nominated squads from completion of Phase 3 training, in which the majority will remain until promoted to Leading Hand; they will also be able to request to change squads via C231 or C240 action.

On occasions CND may have to draft personnel to a Non-Preference Area in order to balance manpower requirements across the FAA as a whole.

When this occurs it will be the responsibility of CND and the WMO(Air) at each air station to review Non-Preference Draftees and return them to their preference squad as quickly as practical.

The FAA TMSS has also been designed to enable personnel from the Supply Branch to remain within a FAA squad until promoted Leading Hand; implementation of this policy, however, will be dictated by the Supply Branch Manager.

The FAA TMSS will increase the existing manpower requirement at RNAS Yeovilton (including JFH initially) and RNAS Culdrose by an additional 206 personnel (135 AEM, 12 SE, 29 AH, 5 MET, 9 Chefs, 12 Std, 1 Stores Accountant, 3 Wtr).

The personnel required to fill the Community pools will be generated by a combination of civilianising posts that do not require dedicated Service personnel, such



'My son won't like this... he's not a good swimmer!'

as security duties, and by reducing the number of billets currently requiring FAA personnel that do not require aviation-based skills.

Additionally, there will be an uplift in the overall AH specialisation requirement of 9 ABs.

Implementation:

■ Phase 1 (Apr 03-Oct 03): the formation of the Commando Helicopter Force (CHF) Community to encompass 845, 846, 847 and 848 Squadrons together with CHF HQ for all ABs, including General Service and Supply ratings (RM personnel will not be included at this point).

The WMO(Air) will form with a single CMC in Feb 03, expanding to full complement by Sep 03.

■ Phase 2 (Oct 03-Apr 04): the remaining four Aircraft Force Communities (Merlin, Lynx, Sea King and Sea Harrier (becoming

GR7/GR9)) and three air station Communities will form in the following order, with the WMO(Air) at RNAS Culdrose and JFH being established from Aug 03 and Apr 04 respectively:

- Merlin - Oct 03
- Lynx - Nov 03
- Sea King - Dec 03
- FA2/JFH - Jan 04
- TAS Community RNAS Culdrose - Feb 04 (to encompass CVSS)
- TAS Community RNAS Yeovilton - Mar 04 (to encompass LPH and LPDs)
- JFH Community at RAF Wittering and Cottesmore - Apr 04

■ Phase 3 (From Apr 04) - On satisfactory roll-out of the three squads, control of the drafting cycle will be delegated to the WMO(Air)s.

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● From the early days to bang-up-to-date: a church parade in 1905 at the Depot Royal Marines Light Infantry (left), the Depot Band from Deal in 1907 (top), and members of the Band Service prior to receiving their Bachelor degrees in 2001 (below)

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IT'S ONE HUNDRED years of melodic Marines, military marching and maritime music since the Royal Marines Band Service was founded in 1903 at Eastney in Portsmouth to provide bands for the Royal Navy.

Music and drum beats have been used since Roman times to keep the military in step or transmit orders on the battlefield or in camp.

While Divisional Bands were formed at Chatham, Plymouth, Portsmouth and Deal from 1767, it was not until 1903 and the establishment of the Royal Naval School of Music that the Service was born.

The year 1930 saw the Band service move from its original Portsmouth home to the Royal Marines Depot at Deal.

Then with the onslaught of World War II the Band took up residence in Malvern before splitting into two constituent elements, the Juniors heading to the Isle of Man and the Seniors moving to the eastern side of the country at Scarborough. Re-united at Burford in 1946, the Band returned to Deal in 1950.

The Royal Marines School of Music is now based in HMS Nelson in Portsmouth and a regular stream of outstanding musicians march out the gates at the end of their professional training.

A link has been established with Portsmouth University that allows musicians to gain civilian qualifications such as a Bachelor of Music degree.

Once primed to the optimal level young Bandsman and women set out to take their places in one

of the five Royal Marine Bands.

This centenary year sees a number of special events to mark the celebration. A free open air concert is planned for Eastney on July 20, so the audience will be able to lie back and enjoy the sun's rays and sweet music.

Two days later the Post Office are releasing commemorative first day covers for the Royal Marine Band Service. In addition a book is planned for the autumn to commemorate the centenary year.

October 4 and 5 will see on successive days a reunion for members of the Band at HMS Nelson and a memorial service at St John's Cathedral in Old Portsmouth.

● A Corps drummer winning hearts and minds in Kosovo in 2000



● The times they are a-changing: the bands from the Royal Yachts Britannia in 1954 (right) and Victoria and Albert in 1913 (below)



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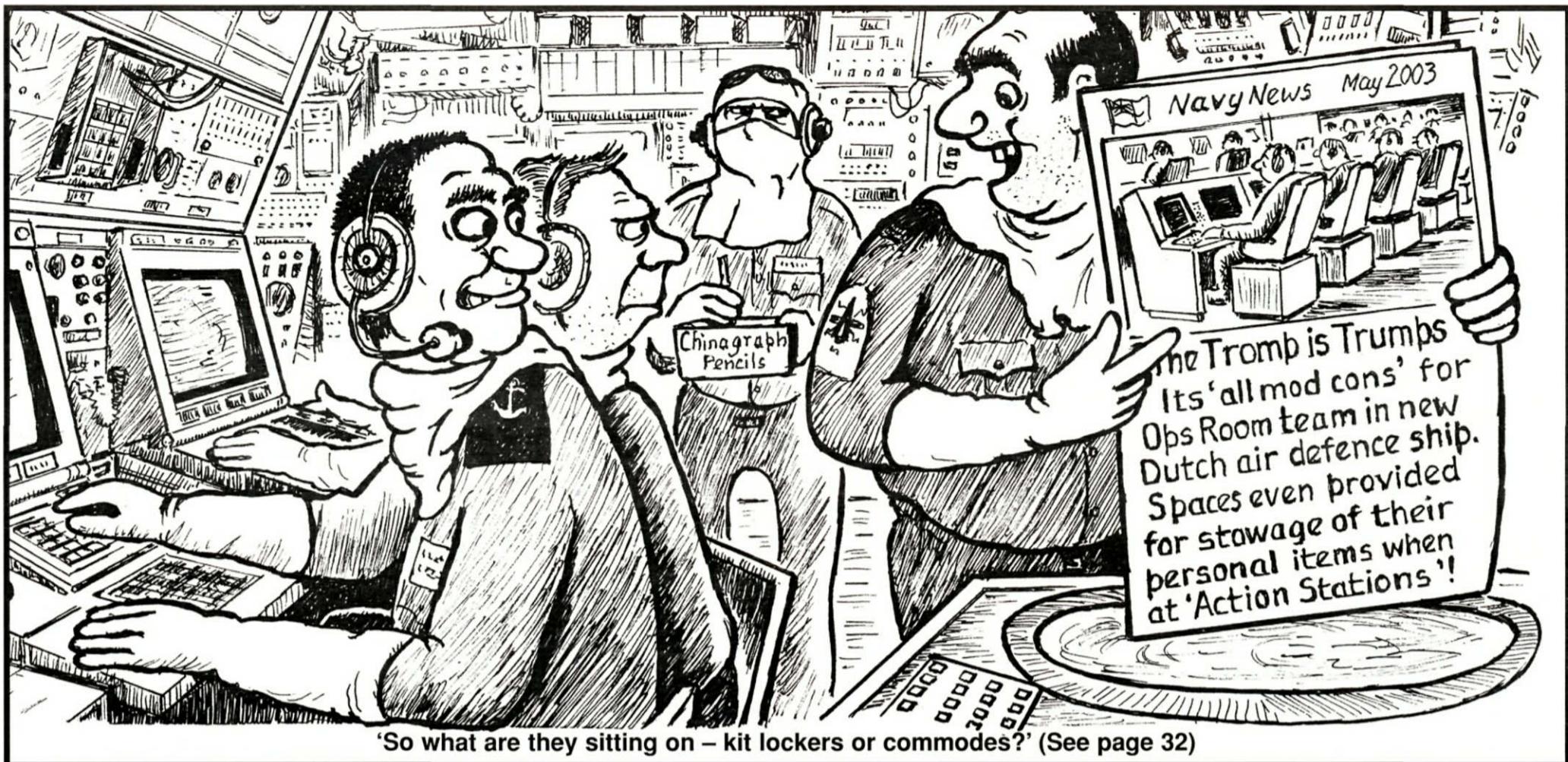
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NEWSVIEW

Old Cossacks in step with the new

A MEMORIAL stone in Jossingfjord, SW Norway commemorates one of the Royal Navy's most celebrated actions – when sailors armed with cutlasses boarded the Altmark and freed 300 merchant seamen taken from ships sunk by the Graf Spee.

At a time when our morale was at a low ebb the cry 'The Navy's here!' echoed around the world, harking back to the swashbuckling spirit of Nelson's time. Churchill was chuffed to bits.

The Germans, needless to say, were not so keen. Among the many fascinating items on display at the 12th annual reunion of the HMS Cossack Association at Eastbourne was a photograph of a sign the occupying Nazi forces erected at the scene of the crime, as they saw it: 'HERE ON 16TH FEBRUARY 1940 THE ALTMARK WAS SET UPON BY BRITISH SEA PIRATES'.

Well, we all see things differently – and that is a truism never more true than with the current business in Iraq, where the coalition forces, quite apart from winning the war itself, seemed to have had their work cut out for them in winning the hearts and minds of the people they were liberating, not to mention those of a sizeable proportion of the rest of the world.

As the full horror of Saddam Hussein's Grand Guignol, weirdly Byzantine regime is uncovered, any ambiguities ought to be quickly resolved. They probably won't be, though – not in the Arab world as a whole, certainly, and not entirely, perhaps, in Iraq either.

Because there are still, nearly 60 years later, plenty of apologists for Hitler, even in Germany – and still more in Russia for Stalin, who murdered far more of his own people than Hitler did his.

The 24-hour blanket media coverage of Operation Telic has gleefully pointed up the (wholly understandable, given their past experiences) reluctance of Iraqi civilians, at least in the initial stages, to be seen on TV greeting our troops with garlands of flowers.

Thus are myths created – and thus the rapid growth of instant-on-the-spot satellite transmitted televising of warfare before any clear picture has emerged may work to perpetuate them.

One recent development can work to a better understanding, though; the much maligned Internet does offer apparently limitless opportunities for communication between ordinary, as opposed to telly people. Among the guests at the Cossack Association reunion was a pair of Norwegians, Finn Nesvold and Geirr Haarr, who had picked up on its excellent website to further their own researches on what for them remains a matter of intense local interest.

So do associations like the Cossacks' – which the town of Eastbourne appears to have taken to its heart since they first held their reunion at the warmly welcoming Burlington Hotel five years ago – keep their own personal interests, and those of the Navy as a whole, smartly in step with reality. And help set the record straight.



● HMS Cossack was torpedoed and sunk on October 23, 1941 with the loss of 158 officers and men. Contact her Association on <http://www.hmscossack.freescrve.co.uk>

All geared up for winter

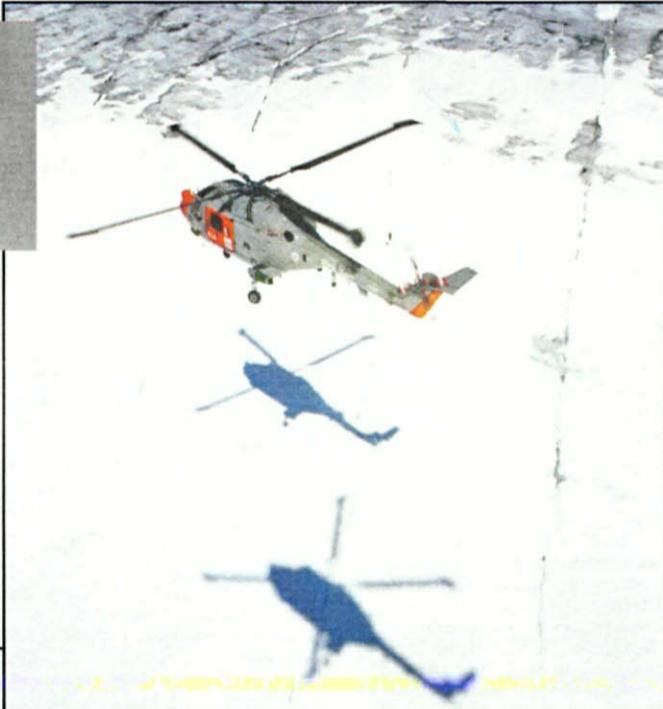
ON PASSAGE to South Georgia HMS Leeds Castle passed through huge fields of icebergs, ranging in size from small 'growlers' to a tabular giant 40 miles long.

With the Governor Howard Pierce embarked, the ship conducted 'in company' operations with ice patrol ship HMS Endurance. These included flying operations with her Lynx helicopters and beach reconnaissance by Army patrols of the Falkland Islands Resident Infantry Company.

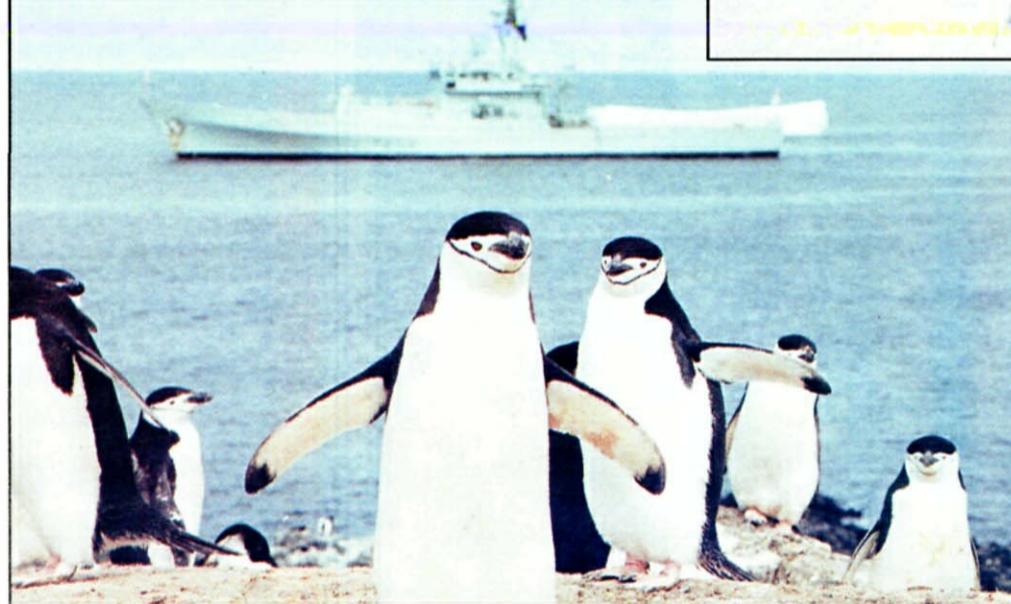
She then made her passage back to the Falklands in deteriorating weather conditions with wave heights between eight and 10 metres.

After two weeks maintenance, Leeds Castle sailed for a patrol to the east of the islands, the first day hosting members of the Army and Royal Air Force based at Mount Pleasant to give them an insight into the Senior Service.

As *Navy News* went to press a team of specialists from Faslane was due to visit the ship for a period of Operational Sea Training to ensure she is ready for the rigours of the South Atlantic winter.



● Above: A Lynx Mk 3 from 212 Flight HMS Endurance during flying operations over a glacier in South Georgia. The helicopters are used in a variety of tasks including search and rescue, vertical photography and support for scientific work carried out in some of the most inhospitable places on Earth



● Left: Chinstrap penguins encountered by HMS Leeds Castle when she visited Thule Island, the southernmost of the South Sandwich Islands

2SL's recommended reading

REVISED and updated Personnel Functional Standards for the Naval Service have just been issued by the Second Sea Lord, on behalf of the Navy Board.

The new PFS comes in two formats, first as an pocket size personal copy, outlining the key Terms and Conditions of Service that apply to all Naval personnel, wherever they are serving.

There is also a more detailed version, aimed at Troop Commanders, Divisional

Officers and Line Managers as well as the Command.

It takes account of routine changes to a number of regulations during the past couple of years – and also incorporates the new standards introduced by TOP-MAST, the Navy's new personnel management system.

Distribution of the booklets is underway and should be completed by the middle of May.



April 2003



Operation Telic



SPECIAL DELIVERY



HMS Ocean has been conducting amphibious operations in the Gulf while deployed on Operation Telic.

Pictured here (left) is a Sea King helicopter from 845 Naval Air Squadron taking off from the ship for Al Faw, delivering stores and ammunition

Below: Another kind of stores – Capt Kevin Cooney and Sgt Adrian Kent of 3 Cdo Bde Joint NBC Regiment inspect the recently discovered Iraqi NBC training compound in the southern port of Um Qasr.



The Queen meets the families



THE QUEEN shares a joke with LMA Carolyn Wilson of HMS Enterprise as she arrives at HMS Drake in Devonport with the Duke of Edinburgh to meet over 450 relatives of Service personnel deployed in the Gulf.

Service families, ranging from babies only weeks old to a 101-year-old grandmother from Plymouth, were there. They represented Service and Ministry of Defence civilian personnel in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Royal Air Force, Army, Reserves and Kuwait British Embassy.

Her Majesty met in private three bereaved families of Service men who lost their lives in the US helicopter and RN Sea King helicopter accidents.

A flower posy was presented to the Queen by 11-year-old Stacey Edwards, whose father RM Sgt Stuart Edwards is deployed with UK Land Forces Commando Support Group as part of 3 Cdo Bde, based in Plymouth.

A Guard of Honour was formed by trainees from HMS Raleigh.

Free postal service to Armed Forces personnel serving in the Gulf started on April 17, with the "generous support" of the Royal Mail Group.

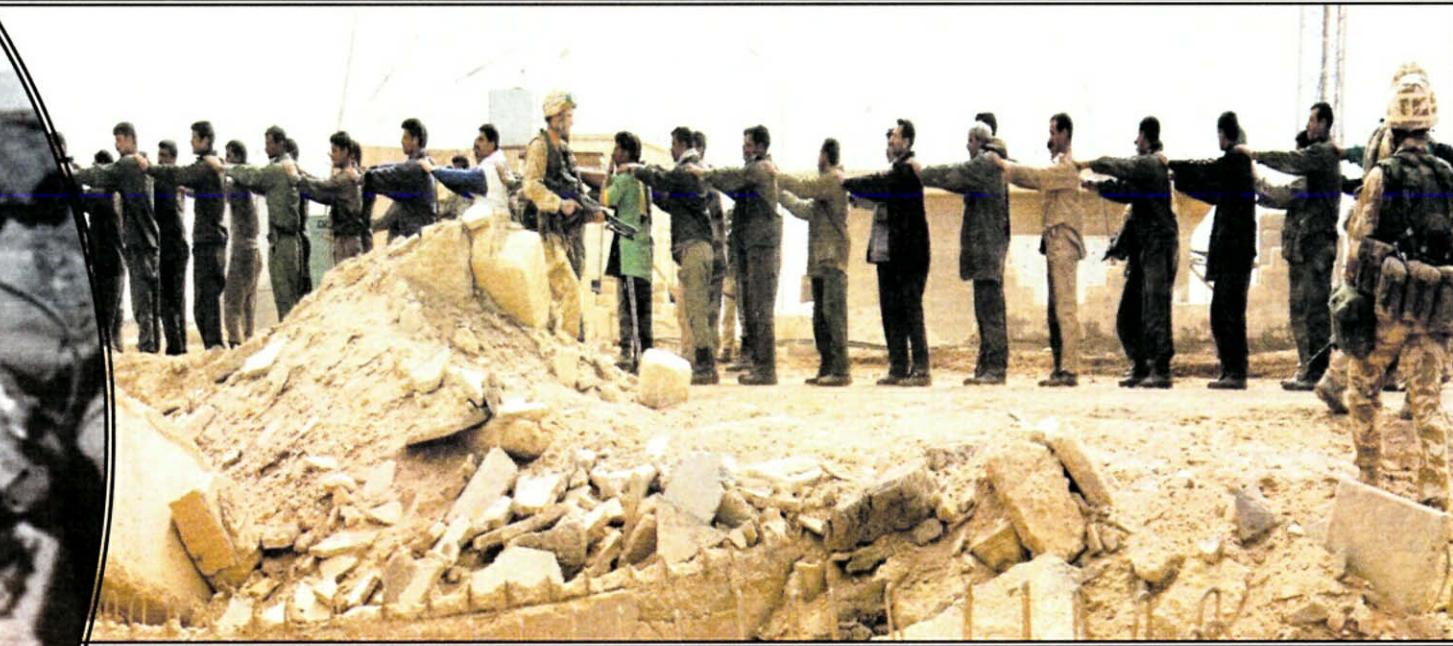
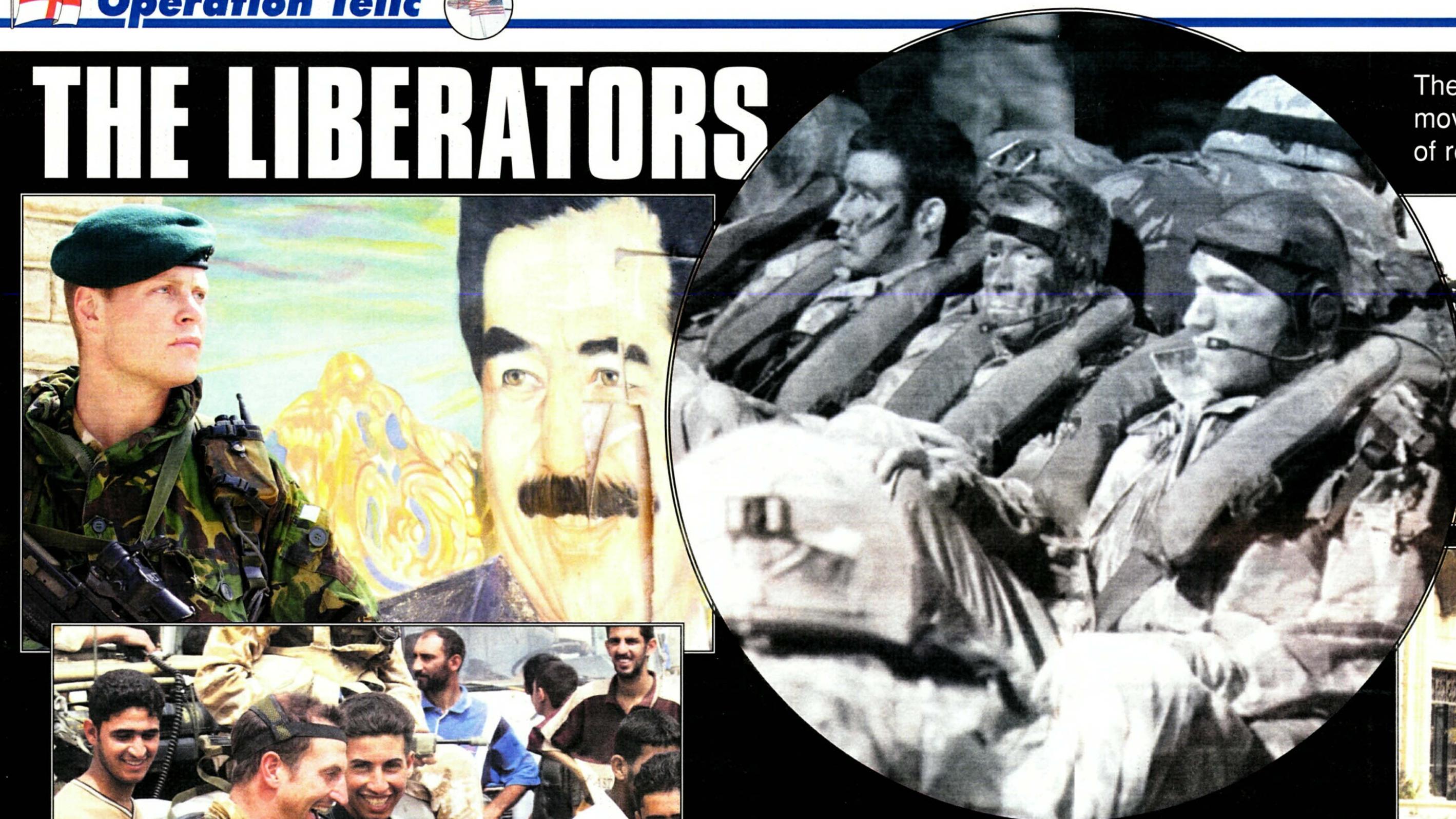
Friends and families may send letters and packets up to 2kg in weight free of charge to BFPO addresses there.

Meanwhile BAE Systems has become the launch company of SSAFA Forces Help's corporate appeal for the Gulf.

The national charity helping serving and ex-Service personnel and their families in need will receive a £100,000 donation from the company over a two year period.



THE LIBERATORS



Pictures clockwise from top left:

- Mne Adam Grey stands guard at 3 Cdo Bde HQ in the port of Umm Qasr
- Delta Coy, 40 Cdo take a moment to reflect before disembarking from the Fleet flagship HMS Ark Royal for operations in Southern Iraq
- Evacuating a critically injured Iraqi soldier
- Royal Marine Rigid Inflatable Boats from 539 Assault Sqn outside Saddam's presidential place in Basra shortly after it was secured

- On the alert in the palace grounds
- Juliet Coy 42 Cdo lose 7-3 to the locals in a friendly soccer match played in the heat of the afternoon
- Evacuating a critically injured Iraqi soldier
- Reassuring anxious women at the doors of their houses
- A Royal Marine from 3Cdo BRF uses his diplomatic skills to full effect on the streets of Basra





GREAT WAR CLASSIC RESURFACES ON DVD

CURRENTLY showing on BBC2 for the first time since the 1960s, *The Great War* remains one of the greatest documentary series ever.

Its scale matches its subject and is likely to remain unsurpassed – which TV company would be bold enough today to commission a 26-parter on anything?

Admirers will be interested to know that the whole thing is now available, complete and unabridged, on DVD and video.

Intended to be the definitive film history of World War I (much of the script was written by a leading historian of the period, John Terraine), each of the 40 minute episodes is narrated by Sir Michael Redgrave.

Other famous actors lending their voice talents include Sir Ralph Richardson and Marius Goring.

All the episodes feature original archive film footage as well as exclusive interviews with many veterans – most of whom were still only in their 60s at the time the series was made.

Inevitably most of the attention is centred on the Western Front (where the Royal Naval Division was closely engaged) but the war at sea, particularly the Battle of Jutland, gets more coverage than is usual in 1914-18 overviews.

The Great War DVD set comprises seven discs in a presentation box and features a full colour illustrated guidebook and two bonus documentaries. It retails for £99.99. The video version comes in a boxed set of ten cassettes priced at £89.99.

Both are available from all good retailers or direct from DD Video, Unit 1, Pool Bank Business Park, High Street, Tarvin, Chester CH3 8JH. Add £3.75 towards postage and packaging. Credit card customers can order copies by ringing the 24 hour DVD Video hotline on 01829 741490.

• **GREAT WAR IMAGES** : The Second Battlecruiser Squadron in action during the Battle of Jutland, May 31 1916 with (inset) the wreck of HMS Invincible, taken from HMS Benbow half an hour after her destruction. There were only six survivors, picked up by the torpedo boat destroyer HMS Badger, approaching on the right. The British battlecruisers sacrificed armour for speed and firepower – a fatal flaw which also resulted in the loss of HMS Queen Mary and Indefatigable



Photographed in the State Drawing Room on board *Britannia*.

The Royal Yacht Britannia 1953-2003 50th Anniversary China Collection

To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the launch of The Royal Yacht *Britannia*, this official commemorative fine bone china range was commissioned exclusively for The *Britannia* Collection. The combination of *Britannia*'s crest, the crisp blue of the Bridge and Laundry Room and the gold and brass ornamentation throughout the ship was the inspiration for the design.

This magnificent range, which is made in England and finished by hand, includes two special Limited Edition pieces, a 10" Commemorative Plate at £75.00 (Edition 500) and a Neptune Beaker at £49.00 (Edition 1000), both presented in a satin lined gift box together with a Limited Edition Certificate. The other pieces that complete the range are a Hinged Pillbox & a Tea Cup and Saucer, both £30 each, a Tankard at £20 and a Coaster/Dish at £12.75, all beautifully gift boxed and complete with a collector's card. Prices do not include postage.

To order your commemorative china please call our gift shop direct on 0131 555 8811 or shop online at www.royalyachtbritannia.co.uk

Britannia is owned by The Royal Yacht *Britannia* Charitable Trust. Your purchase will help to preserve and maintain this historic ship.

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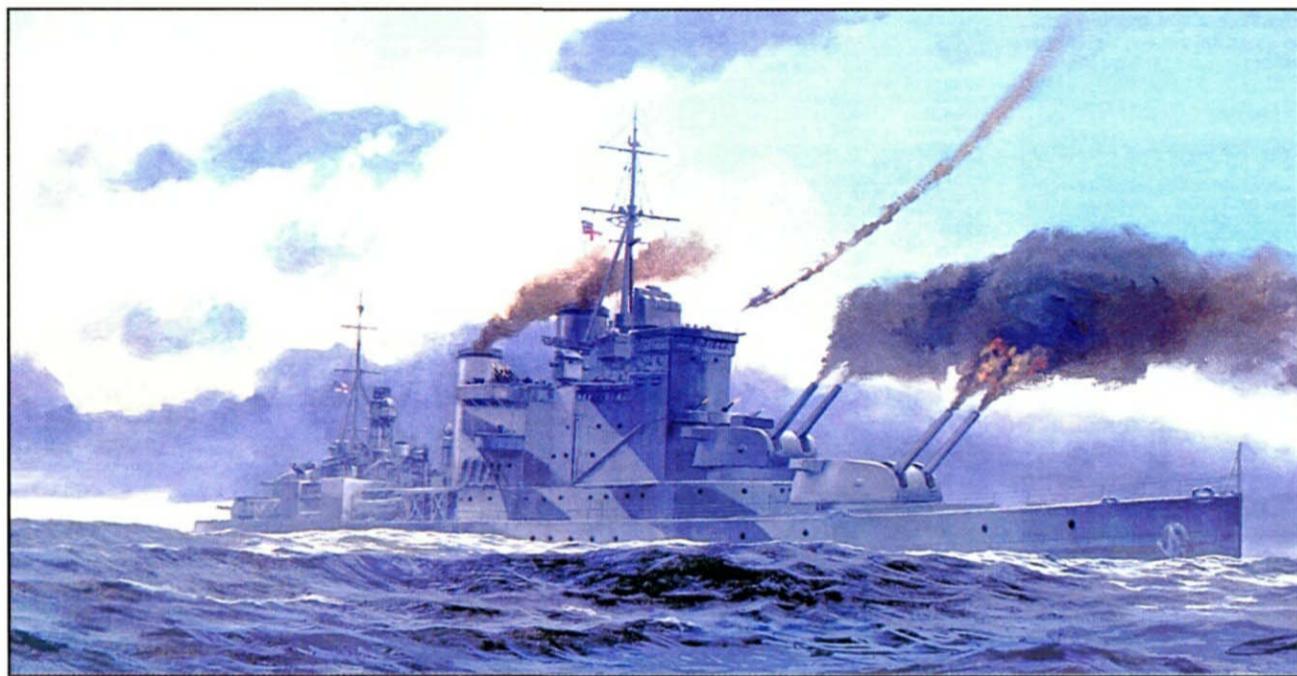
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Arctic action picture has London in starring role



PLYMOUTH-based maritime artist Dennis Andrews pays tribute to one of World War II's forgotten warships in his latest work.

Arctic Action shows the cruiser HMS London firing her guns to repel an attack by German Ju-88 torpedo bombers during a convoy run to Russia in 1942-43.

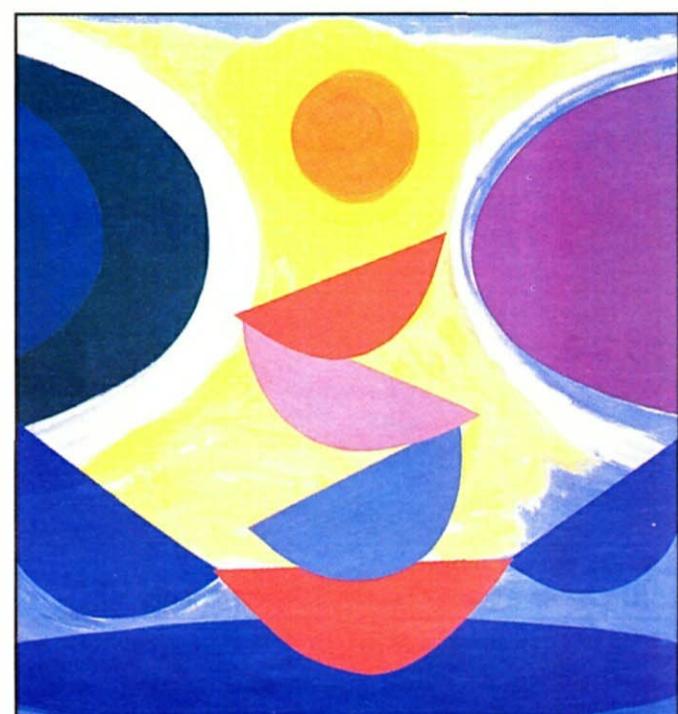
Dennis carried out exacting research to compose the painting, including talks with members of the ship's crew.

He was commissioned to create the scene for the front cover of *HMS London* by Iain Ballantyne, one of the Warships of the Royal Navy series published by Pen & Sword at £19.95.

The London was flagship of the escort force for the notorious Convoy PQ17 which suffered heavy losses. She and other warships in the force had been withdrawn by First Sea Lord Dudley Pound who mistakenly believed the German battleship Tirpitz was about to attack.

"There is a feeling that London's fine war record was deliberately, and unjustly, glossed over because of her association with PQ17," Dennis told *Navy News*.

"London's sailors endured some of the most atrocious weather known to man and faced months of determined attack by the Germans, and yet their campaign is not commemorated to any great extent."



Sir Terry thinks big

MARITIME RHYTHMS is the title of an exhibition by Sir Terry Frost at the National Maritime Museum Cornwall at Falmouth.

One of the UK's leading artists, Sir Terry has included a painting specially painted for the Museum, 'Maritime Blue'.

"Having visited the Museum on a number of occasions during its development, I have been affected by its growing strength," he says.

"It gives me the feeling of a Force 9 gale – full of relief that is no more – and I am excited by the buffeting of the shapes and forms within the building."

The Museum will also display a large painting on its balcony titled 'Spiral Assembly' – which will need the help of a firm of scaffolders to hang it.

Said Exhibition Manager Kath Lynch: "We've never displayed any work of this scale, but hanging one of Sir Terry's large paintings will be easy compared to some of the work that went into suspending the boats we have displayed in our Flotilla gallery."

● 'Flung Purple' (Acrylic and collage on canvas, 2002) is the example featured here from the exhibition which continues until September 28

Flowers out-gunned and out-maneuvred

IN WORLD War II Britain paid a high price for being dependent on merchant shipping for her survival.

There were 2,426 ships lost with 29,180 men in them killed and many more maimed and wounded. Their stories are seldom told, but Bernard Edwards – who began his own sea-going career as an officer cadet in merchant ships towards the end of the war – has helped to do them justice with the aptly titled *The Quiet Heroes* (Pen & Sword £19.95).

As an island with limited natural resources, Britain has always relied on merchant shipping for all kinds of essential supplies and this weakness was magnified tenfold during 1939-45 when delivery of these from her dominions and from the USA was constantly under threat.

The men of her Merchant Navy, although unarmed civilians going about their normal business, were the first to be involved in the war against Nazi Germany. Less than nine hours after the declaration of war, the

liner Athenia was sunk without warning by a German U-Boat.

For almost four years the principal campaign, the Battle of the Atlantic, did not go well for the merchant ships, scarcity of escorts and indifferent air-cover making the fight hopelessly one-sided.

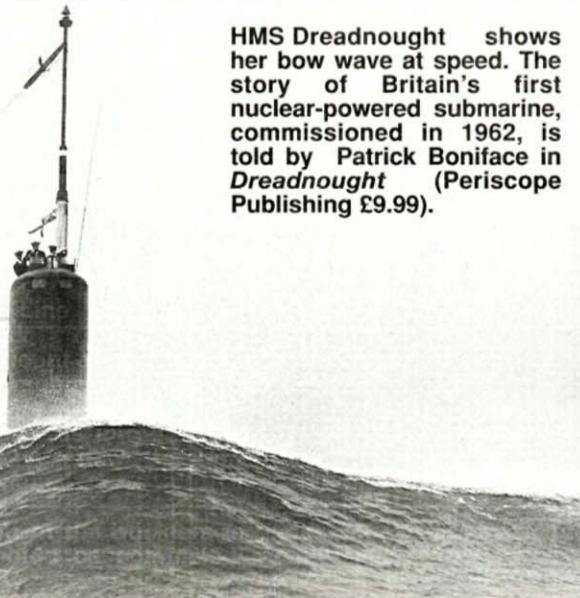
The German Type VIIIC U-boat, of which 650 took part in the conflict, was their chief adversary. It had a range of 8,500 miles, carried 14 torpedoes, an 88mm deck gun and three anti-aircraft cannon and was capable of 17.3 knots on the surface and 7.6 knots submerged.

Against them for much of the time were ranged only the 900-ton Flower-class corvettes of the RN and Royal Canadian Navy, with a top speed of only 15 knots and armed with a single 4in gun and a handful of depth charges.

Attacking on the surface at night, the U-boats were usually able to out-gun and out-maneuvre them.

Yet despite the terrible losses they suffered, the convoys always clawed their way through.

Riding high



HMS Dreadnought shows her bow wave at speed. The story of Britain's first nuclear-powered submarine, commissioned in 1962, is told by Patrick Boniface in *Dreadnought* (Periscope Publishing £9.99).

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THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

NAVY NEWS looks back through its pages to recall some of the May headlines of past decades...



● HMS Spartan in 1980

40 years ago

HMS LION on her way from Hong Kong rescued six men adrift in a life-boat after a Panamanian ship *National Glory* had been abandoned.

30 years ago

THE serious issue of hair length in the Navy in the 1970s was up for discussion. While sympathetic, the Admiralty felt the concession to sideburns was enough...

20 years ago

IN A rare rescue role for a nuclear-powered submarine **HMS Spartan** saved the life of a Florida fisherman.

The hunter-killer submarine was on her way to Port Everglade when the man was spotted clinging to his capsized boat in hurricane winds just south of Cape Canaveral.

Unable to reach the fishing boat, Spartan alerted another vessel to come to the rescue.

LT CDR ALEXANDER JOHN TODD MBE

Aged 82, March 25th, 2003

John Todd as he was generally known was born in Lowestoft on the 25th of January, 1921. As the son of a Naval officer, it was no surprise when he joined the Navy in 1937 as an engineering artificer, at RNDY Rosyth. He saw active service during WWII, and continued to serve until 1971. Among the ships on which he served were Rambles, Onyx, Colossus, Euryalus, Dalrymple, Ausonia and Minerva. After leaving the Navy he moved to Yorkshire and worked with a former Naval colleague who ran an engineering business. He did this work until he retired. It was while he was at RNDY Rosyth that he met Janet Muir Foster, who became his wife and lifelong companion. His wife survives him.

Appointments

Lt Cdr M.B. Davies to 702 Squadron Heron as CO on 1 Aug 03.

Capt B.N.B. Williams to HMS Campbeltown as CO on 29 Apr 03.

Cdr D.C.K. Barker to HMS Somerset as CO on 26 Feb 03.

Cdre T.C. Chittenden to be promoted Rear Admiral and to Chief of Staff (Support) to Commander in Chief Fleet on 29 Apr 03.

Capt A.R.C. Bennett to be promoted Commodore and to be CO of RNNS Yeovilton on 15 Jul 03.

Lt Cdr M.J. Connell to HMS Severn as CO on 19 Aug 03.

Lt Cdr J.E. Cooke to HMS Sandown as CO on 29 Jul 03.

Lt Cdr J.A. Ley to HMS Leeds Castle as CO on 27 Aug 03.

Lt Cdr R.V. Mannion to Submarine Escape Training Tank, Royal Hospital Haslar, as Officer Commanding on 20 Nov 03.

Lt Cdr A.J.L. Watt to HMS Ramsey as CO on 15 Aug 03.

Sports lottery

1 Mar 03: £5,000 – **Lt. E. Ward**, 849 NAS; £1,500 – **CPOAE A.N. Crocker**, Heron; £500 – **POMEM J. Kirby**, Sultan

8 Mar 03: £5,000 – **MNE M. James**, UKLFCSSG; £1,500 – **Sub Lt K. White**, RAF Shawbury; £500 – **CPOMEA M. Burns**, Foxhill

15 Mar 03: £5,000 – **Lt M. Banks**, Dryad; £1,500 – **MNE R. Montgomerie**, Cdo Log; £500 – **CPORS S. Clements**, HQDCSA

22 Mar 03: £5,000 – **WOM S. Grant**, Grafton/Dryad; £1,500 – **LS(SR) C. Jones**, Echo; £500 – **WO R. Eaton**, RM Poole

29 Mar 03: £5,000 – **MNE R. Hanlan**, Cdo Log Reg; £1,500 – **Lt Cdr R. Cornick**, MOD London; £500 – **MEA APP P. Delaney**, Manchester

For more information on the RN & RM Sports Lottery, call 023 9272 3806.

Swap drafts

LCH Todd, Contact: RNAS Culdrose 93781 2170. Draft: HMS York, 19 May 03. Will swap for: any Plymouth-based ship, deploying or not.

Deaths

Colour Sergeant John Cecil Royal Marines, Crash of US Sea Knight CH-46 helicopter south of the Kuwait border during Operation Telic, March 21.

Captain Philip Stuart Guy Royal Marines, Crash of US Sea Knight CH-46 helicopter south of the Kuwait border during Operation Telic, March 21.

Marine Sholto Brogh Hedenskog Royal Marines, Crash of US Sea Knight CH-46 helicopter south of the Kuwait border during Operation Telic, March 21.

OM(C)1 Ian Seymour, 148 Forward Observation Unit Battery Royal Artillery, Crash of US Sea Knight CH-46 helicopter south of the Kuwait border during Operation Telic, March 21.

Warrant Officer 2 Mark Stratford Royal Marines, Crash of US Sea Knight CH-46 helicopter south of the Kuwait border during Operation Telic, March 21.

Major Jason G. Ward Royal Marines, Crash of US Sea Knight CH-46 helicopter south of the Kuwait border during Operation Telic, March 21.

Captain Philip D. Green 849 Squadron, Collision of two Sea King Mk7 ASaC helicopters during Operation Telic, Lt Green joined Navy in 1996 and began flying in Firefly aircraft in 1997 at RAF Barkston Heath, before moving onto the next stage of training with Squirrel helicopters at RAF Shawbury. Served with 819 NAS at Prestwick from 2000 and joined 849 A Flight in May this year, March 22.

Lt Antony 'Tony' King 849 Squadron, Collision of two Sea King Mk7 ASaC helicopters during Operation Telic. Lt King joined Navy in 1987 and trained as a Sea King Observer, receiving his wings in 1990. During the last Gulf War he served in HMS Ark Royal, then on his return to the UK joined 849 Sqn HQ staff. Since then Lt King had served in the Adriatic, and despite several moves with the Navy, Helston was regarded as home. Lt King had recently been selected for promotion to Lt Cdr March 22.

Lt Marc A. Lawrence 849 Squadron, Collision of two Sea King Mk7 ASaC helicopters during Operation Telic. Joined Navy in 1999 and trained as a Sea King Observer, receiving his wings in 2002 before joining 849 Squadron. Aged 26, February 22.

Lt Philip J. 'Stretch' West 849 Squadron, Collision of two Sea King Mk7 ASaC helicopters during Operation Telic. Lt West's interest in the Navy started at Salford University with the URNU, and he joined the Navy on graduation in 1992. He trained as a Sea King Observer and won his wings in 1994. He served in HMS Invincible during the Adriatic deployment of 1996. Aged 32, March 22.

Lt James R. Williams 849 Squadron, Collision of two Sea King Mk7 ASaC helicopters during Operation Telic. Lt Williams joined the Navy in 1999 and trained as a Sea King Observer, receiving his wings in 2002. He joined 849 Squadron A Flight in January this year. Association of Royal Naval Officers. Aged 28, March 22.

Lt Andrew S. Wilson 849 Squadron, Collision of two Sea King Mk7 ASaC helicopters during Operation Telic. Lt Wilson was a pilot who had served with 849 Squadron for the past three years. Aged 36, March 22.

NA(AH)1 Wayne Vermeer, 702 Squadron, March 29.

LALMEM Ryan Fletcher, HMS Kent, March 30.

Major Stephen Alexis Ballard Royal Marines, 3 Commando Brigade. On Operation Telic, but of natural causes. Joined RMs in 1994 and promoted to Major in 2001, March 30.

Marine Christopher R. Maddison Royal Marines, 9 Assault Squadron. Killed in action fighting in the area of Basra on Operation Telic, Aged 24, March 30.

CPOMEA Michael Blyth, HMS Tireless, April 2.

WOMAA Kevin Balloch, HMS Neptune, April 6.

Capt Charles Coke DSO, Naval aviator. Awarded DSO for his development of air defensive and offensive moves during Operation Pedestal from carrier Victorious. Novel approach to air-training started the School of Fighter Direction at RNAS Yeovil with personnel pedalling ice-cream tricycles according to radioed instructions as if using radar. Ships included: Shoreham, Furious – both pre-war and prior to transfer to aviation branch, then Victorious, Indomitable, Nigeria, Apollo (CO), Victorious once more but as CO with the carrier fully rebuilt with angled deck and steam catapults and operating the latest jet aircrafts. Retired to Spain in 1960. Aged 93, February 6.

Surgeon Vice-Admiral Sir Eric Bradbury, During the 1960s began transformation of old-fashioned Sick Berth branch into modern Medical branch. Joined Navy in 1934 and ship and posts included: Barham (Mediterranean), Cumberland (Far East), Charybdis and Oxfordshire (World War II), as Surgeon Rear-Admiral Medical Officer in Charge of RN Hospital Haslar (1966) and honorary physician to the Queen, Surgeon Vice-Admiral Medical Director General (1969-72). Aged 91, January 6.

Vice Admiral Sir Ian Hogg DSC and Bar, Received first DSC for part in evacuation of Crete while serving in Australian destroyer Napier and second while serving in cruiser Mauritius during harsh night action against enemy convoys. Joined Navy in 1929 as Special Entry and ships include: Erebus, Barham, Valiant, Effingham, Acheron, Bideford before qualifying as specialist navigator in 1937, then Southampton, Cardiff and Penelope. Subsequent posts include: Master of the Fleet, command of destroyer Sliwa, Flag Officer Medway and Admiralty Superintendent Chatham Dockyard as Rear Admiral, then Vice-Chief of the Association of Royal Naval Officers. Aged 91, March 2.

Captain Robert 'Bob' Lloyd DSC and Bar, Awarded two DSCs and Mentioned in Dispatches three times for role in anti-submarine operations during World War II.

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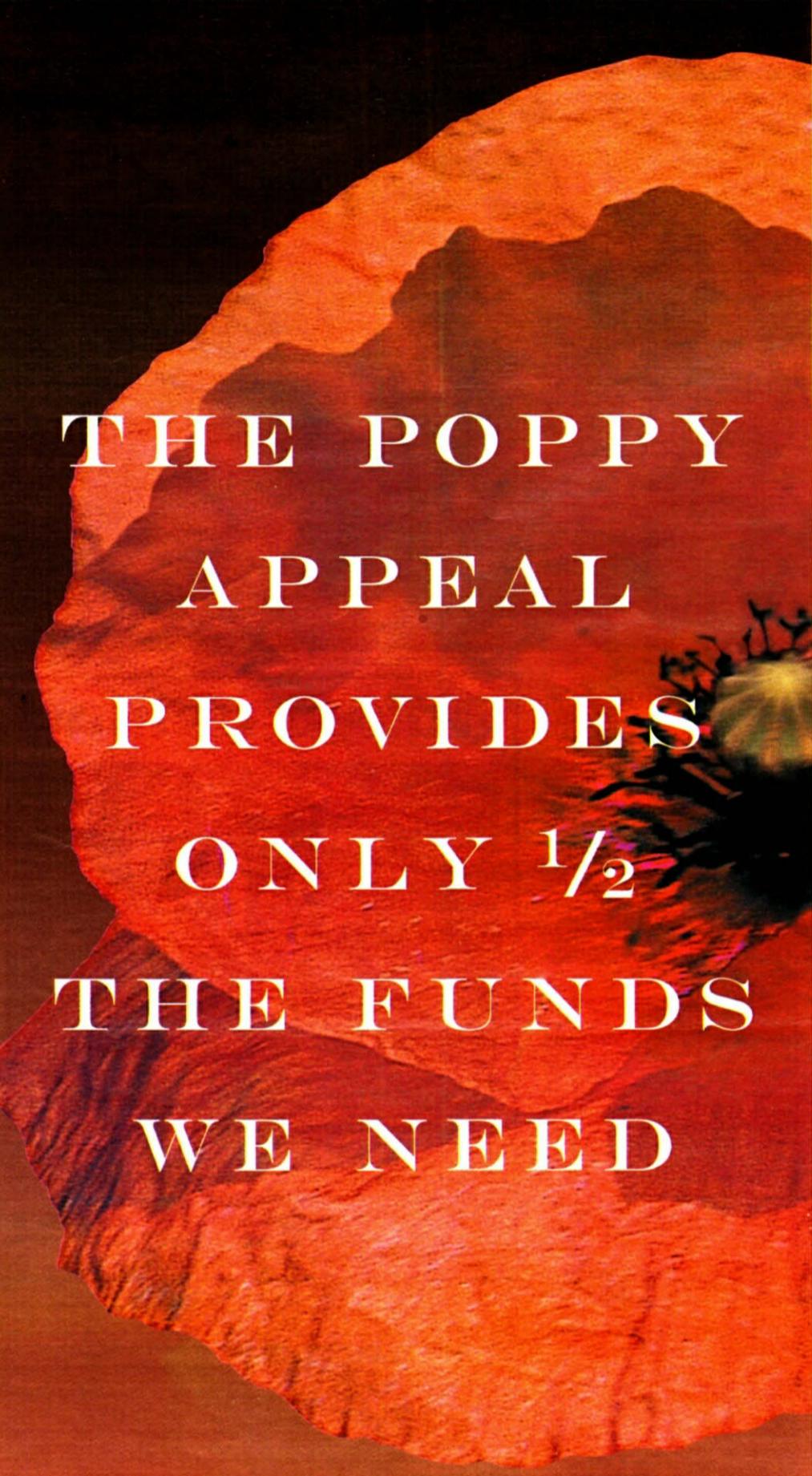
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Captain Robert 'Bob' Lloyd DSC and Bar



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Royal Naval Association

Praise for Forces in the Gulf

A MESSAGE of support has been sent from the National President of the RNA to all involved in operations in Iraq: "At a meeting of the National Council of the RNA on March 22, members representing branches from throughout the UK, the Republic of Ireland and 20 other countries unanimously asked me to convey the Association's strong support for all our Service people engaged in operations involving Iraq, especially our shipmates of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

"We mourn those who have given their lives to make our world safer and better and we are confident in the skill and bravery of the UK Armed Forces.

"We pray for your success and safe return."

Christchurch marks 60th anniversary

TO MARK the sixtieth anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic, the Christchurch branch has arranged a special service of commemoration and thanksgiving to take place in Priory church on Sunday May 4 at 11:15am.

The Rev Hugh Williams, vicar of Christchurch and branch chaplain, will conduct the service.

The branch extends a warm welcome to fellow shipmates and their standards who should assemble outside the north door of the Priory at 10:45am.

For further details contact Shipmate Joe Waterman on 01202 483909.

Portsmouth test for standards

THE No.3 area biennial standard bearers competition will be held on Saturday May 31 in the gymnasium of HMS Nelson at a starting time of 1:30pm.

The gymnasium will be open from 10:30am for familiarisation.

It is hoped that lunch will be available for purchase in the Senior Rates Mess.

Those planning to attend and have lunch should inform Shipmate Peter Reed before May 17. His telephone and fax number is 01273 503953. He shall also need to know car registrations.



• Mrs Iris Beet, Mrs Micki Blades and Mrs Betty Lloyd flanked by the men representing No.9 Area who gave them a floral tribute in recognition for their hard work over 30 years

Salute to the ladies

HATS off to the ladies of the RNA, the majority associate members, but without whose support branch life would lose a certain sparkle and see a sharp drop in buffet celebrations.

For 30 years, three such ladies Mrs Iris Beet, Mrs Micki Blades and Mrs Betty Lloyd, have been adding their culinary magic to the Lincoln branch, providing members with excellent buffets, and the whole of No.9 Area paid tribute to them.

All praise to them and to similar ladies in branches throughout the country who provide the delicious eats, often reported on at social events.

Think of the costs if the nibbles had to purchased pre-wrapped!

The ladies' talents are not however limited to providing the food. When it comes to fundraising they are a force to be reckoned with and help fill the coffers annually for the association's charities.

Attend any RNA parade in

whatever weather and the ladies are there supporting husbands, sons, daughters' boyfriends and grandchildren (not to mention all the women there in their own right) – many of whom they encouraged to become members of the association.

The ladies of the RNA are in fact a big influence and a growing strength. An increasing number

are holding office at branch level and proving their skills as standard bearers. Many more are also being singled out for awards such as 'Shipmate of the Year'.

With an increasing number of female sailors now serving in the Navy, many today on duty in the Gulf, a time may come when they will boast as many full members in the association as the men.

Carlisle enjoys a tot on Angus

THE Carlisle branch annual general meeting got off to a flying start when chairman, Shipmate Angus Steele, revealed that the occasion marked his 85th birthday and that tots were on him.

At the meeting which followed Shipmate John Montgomery after ten years as secretary and treasurer stood down to be replaced by Shipmate Ian Winter, an ex-Aircraft Handler, who served in the Falklands.

Shipmate Beryl Green was elected treasurer and Shipmate Bill Mitchell continues as welfare officer.

Bringing the meeting to a close Shipmate Spud Murphy proposed "bon voyage and safe return" to Shipmate Brian Ashford, recalled by the Royal Naval Reserve for service in the Gulf during the current conflict.

Brian, a Leading Hand in the Diving branch, said their long service earned them the name of the SAGA branch which should be interpreted to mean "Still Able Geriatric Aquanauts".

RN Division service planned at Blandford

THE ANNUAL memorial service for the officers and men of the Collingwood Battalion Royal Naval Division will be held on Friday June 6 at 3pm at the Collingwood memorial.

This is situated a mile north of Pimperne village on the A354 Blandford to Salisbury road at the entrance of Blandford Camp.

The service will be conducted by the chaplain of HMS Collingwood assisted by the chaplain of the Blandford branch, the organisers of the event.

An address will be given by Capt Christopher Page, the head of the Naval Historical Branch and vice chairman of the committee to reinstate the RN Division memorial. The blessing following the service will be given by the Bishop of Sherborne.

Tokyo calling



NORMAN Summerhayes, Honorary Secretary of Southend-on-Sea branch, met up with shipmates for the first time since 1945-46 at Torquay earlier this year.

They all served at HMS Return, the British embassy in Tokyo, after the Japanese surrender.

• From left to right: (standing) Tel R. Fussey, SBA B. Redfern, Tel A. Parfitt, (sitting) LDL W. Bradshaw, Tel A. Cartwright, AB N. Summerhayes

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



The mystery ship in our March edition was HMS Amazon.

The winner of the £50 prize for identifying her was Mr D. Bladon, of Walsall in the West Midlands.

This month's ship changed her name to avoid confusion with a ship much smaller than her.

We want three answers again – this ship's original name, her new name, and the name of the ship which could have been confused with her. We have removed her name in the

picture to make it more of a challenge.

The correct answer wins another £50.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Closing date for entries is June 13, 2003. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our July edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 99

Name

Address

My answers: 1

2

3

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Royal Naval Association



Rallying call to Liverpool

AREA 10 are all geared up to make the sixtieth anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic the centre of their first quarterly conference and reunion at the start of May this year.

The Adelphi Hotel at the heart of Liverpool will be full to the rafters with people from the Forces with Area 10 setting up their stall.

Over 400 of the folk calling the hotel their home over the Battle of the Atlantic weekend (May 2-5) are from Area 10 RNA with their numbers bolstered by over 200 more who responded to the Area's invite to mark the occasion.

Area 10 have taken a deliberate decision to welcome both Royal Navy and Merchant Navy personnel, opening their doors to both RNA and veterans.

Steve Caulfield, Area 10 PRO, said: "It's the first big event that I have organised for myself.

"I'm looking forward to it, it's a great opportunity for recruitment, particularly with the grand naval traditions of Liverpool itself.

"It's been hard work, 12 months in the planning."

Area 10 decided to move its conference back a week in order to coincide with the Battle of Atlantic celebrations.

With Naval people both former and currently serving drawn to Liverpool over the weekend the Area is hoping to pull in new members and catch the eye of still-serving Naval personnel with the benefits of RNA membership.

Area 10 is the biggest area in terms of geography and numbers, stretching from Carlisle to Wrexham.

Those from Area 10 will be joined at the Adelphi Hotel by members of the Amethyst Association, the Driffield branch of the Ganges Association, and shipmates from other RNA branches outside the area.

The main foyer of the hotel will hold an RNA recruitment and display stand which will be manned throughout the day and able to

provide information on the events planned over the weekend.

The lounge area upstairs at the hotel will be dressed up in naval and maritime themes with white, blue and red ensigns.

Entertainment is planned for each night for anyone who wants to go, with a spectacular gala dinner for the Area's guests.

A standard bearers competition is scheduled for the Saturday morning, open to the whole area whether novices or seasoned marchers.

The afternoon of the same day will see the Area 10 conference, with guest speaker Vice Admiral John McAnally, President of the RNA and an open floor to any questions.

A second RNA stall will be set up near the Albert Dock in the Britannia Pavilion, Leeds. **Area 11** will kindly loaned their display stand for Area 10's use. The area will feature memorabilia from the Royal Naval Museum and the Manchester Ship Canal Company.

There will also be a social area with tables and chairs to encourage visitors to sit and share their memories of the Battle of the Atlantic.

The main service for the Battle takes place at the Anglican cathedral on the Sunday, with allocated tickets distributed to those gathering for the memorial weekend. After the ceremony a march-past will follow with veterans and anyone welcome to join the parade.

Steve added: "This might be the last event for the Battle of the Atlantic supported by the Admiralty, but the RNA will keep the tradition of remembrance going."

One last matter could be key to the success of the weekend – the Adelphi have guaranteed one price for pints of beer across the whole hotel for the RNA.



• Capt Bob McQueen and his wife were the principal guests of honour at the No 4 Area reunion weekend and standard bearers competition at Sand Bay. Pictured before the dinner are, back row, from left: Area President Howard Jefferies, Area Chairman Richard Debenham, Capt Bob McQueen, Reunion Chairman Gordon Studwick; front row, from left: Mrs Watson, Mrs Jefferies, Mrs McQueen, Mrs Studwick and Mrs Debenham

Naval Quirks

MISTY DAY..NORTH SEA.. FIRST WORLD WAR.. BRITISH CRUISER SIGNALS: "ENEMY BATTLESHIP.. AM PREPARING TO RAM."

QUICKLY ADDING: "CANCEL MY LAST SIGNAL.. BATTLESHIP TURNS OUT TO BE A LIGHTHOUSE."

YOU SEE, DANISH LIGHTHOUSES OFTEN HAD TWO TOWERS AND OUTHOUSES WHICH, IN THE MIST –

HM..ARE YOU SURE IT WAS THE "BISMARCK" WE SANK IN THE LAST WAR AND NOT THE EDDYSTONE LIGHTHOUSE ??!

MICAH



Shep draws in a crowd

IF THE Cirencester branch is small in number, what it lacks in size is made up for by the enthusiasm of its 12 members.

Unfazed by the prospect of failure, the stalwart dozen arranged a night's entertainment starring Shep Wooley.

To ensure even a modest attendance Shipmate Norman Wherat, notified branches in the region of the proposed event.

To the astonishment of the 12, roughly 180 shipmates rallied to the call from Swindon, Gloucester, Carterton, Dursley and Stroud branches providing star entertainer Shep with a great audience, which thoroughly enjoyed the occasion. In fact it proved such an outstanding hit it is hoped to stage an encore next year.

Step up for Charlie

FOUNDER member of the Thurrock branch, Shipmate Charlie Mercer, ex-Coastal Forces and Pacific Fleet, has stood down after 19 years as chairman to take over the office of president.

TWO 'hot' topics are on the agenda for debate at the RNA annual conference and reunion weekend at Chatham on June 20-23 this year.

These debating points are full membership and conference travelling expenses which, if carried, will require amendments to the Royal Charter, Rules and Bye Laws.

The City of Inverness branch, supported by the Stonehaven branch, propose that all past and present members of the Naval Forces, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) and the Royal Naval Auxiliary Services (RNAS) and those who served in the Naval Forces of a nation formerly of the British Commonwealth, when that nation was a member, shall be entitled to full membership of the RNA.

The proposal includes the

Debate hots up for RNA

following proviso, that they served for not less than six months or were honourably discharged disabled, having served a shorter period.

In addition, that this amendment be subject to such changes as the Privy Council may require and is agreed by the Association's President.

The inequity of the present system of leaving pool shares on branches for travelling expenses to and from national conferences is a matter the Kidlington and District branch, seconded by the Redditch branch, want the National Council to look into with a view to amending the Bye Laws to introduce a fairer system.

Proposed motions were passed through the Standing Orders Committee in early March in preparation for the big conference planned for the summer.

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The image shows a man in a blue polo shirt and light trousers, a woman in a pink floral dress, and two young children (a boy in a light blue shirt and a girl in a pink dress) walking together on a sidewalk. In the background, there is a large, multi-story building with classical architectural details, including columns and a balcony. The sky is clear and blue.

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The friendliest welcome in the armed forces world

New patron of SSVC to be Duke

THE DUKE of York has agreed to become the new patron of the Services Sound and Vision Corporation (SSVC), the UK charity that provides entertainment to the British Armed Forces around the world.

SSVC provides the British Forces Broadcasting Service (BFBs) to many Navy ships at sea and to 24 countries, ranging from the Falklands to Canada, the Balkans to Afghanistan.

Two English-language radio stations, plus a Gurkha service, and up to four live television channels are beamed by satellite around the world from the SSVC headquarters.

The organisation also mounts the 140 Combined Services Entertainment shows around the world, and runs the 25 Forces cinemas at military bases.



● The Armada Portrait of Elizabeth I

Picture copyright William Tyrwhitt-Drake

Maritime Museum tells story of Elizabeth I

A NEW exhibition opening at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich on May 1 will feature the greatest collection of personal items, paintings and exhibits ever assembled on Elizabeth I.

The exhibition, sponsored by Morgan Stanley, will bring together a wealth of paintings, manuscripts, fine art and personal effects to illustrate Elizabeth's fascinating story, under the guiding hand of guest curator Dr David Starkey.

Designed to appeal to everyone interested in Elizabeth, Tudor England, the genesis of the British empire and the history of a nation with the sea at its heart.

A key theme will be the importance of Elizabeth's seafaring adventures and their role in creating wealth for the crown through burgeoning maritime enterprise.

Director of the National Maritime Museum Roy Clare said: "Elizabeth I was an astute ruler and patron of early English maritime expansion.

"She stabilised England while Europe raged with ideological conflicts, defied the might of the powerful Spanish Empire and supported first

steps in new world colonisation. We relish the opportunity to tell the story of this remarkable woman by staging a world-class exhibition in her birthplace, drawing upon our own rich collections and including international loans of exceptional quality."

Elizabeth was born at Greenwich and spent the first months of her life at Greenwich Palace, birthplace of Henry VIII and now the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site.

Guest curator Dr David Starkey said: "The exhibition will present an evocative account of a young princess who overcame all the odds to become one of England's most successful monarchs."

"Many of the 340 objects to be shown at Greenwich have never previously been displayed in public and convey the highs and lows of Elizabeth's dramatic life."

The exhibition runs from May 1 to September 14 in the CP Ships Special Exhibition Gallery. Admission will cost £9 for adults and £4 for children, with family tickets at reduced cost available. Tickets can be booked by calling 0870 780 4552 or online at www.nmm.ac.uk/tickets.

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THE ROYAL British Legion has said that it welcomes the announcement on March 20 by Dr Lewis Moonie that long-term unmarried partners of Service people killed in action will be eligible for war widow or widower's pensions.

However it believes that still

more action must be taken to ensure the financial security of unmarried Service couples – and their children.

The Legion said: "This is an important step in recognising the needs of today's range of family units – the time is past when a traditional family was a married couple and 2.4 children.

"The changes mean partners of those killed in action, in both married and same sex relationships, will receive a pension equivalent to the benefits paid to a surviving spouse under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme.

"However, unmarried partners and children of Service people who do not die in action will still not receive any lump sum payment or pension, unlike bereaved married spouses."

"The contribution of these Service people is being undervalued compared to their married colleagues and the Legion urges the MOD to urgently address this discrepancy and award proven long-term partners the same benefits as spouses."

For information on the Legion and its work visit the website at www.britishlegion.org.uk or they can be reached by telephone on 0845 7725 725.

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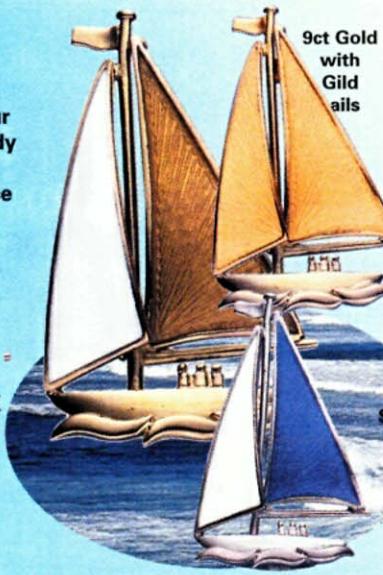
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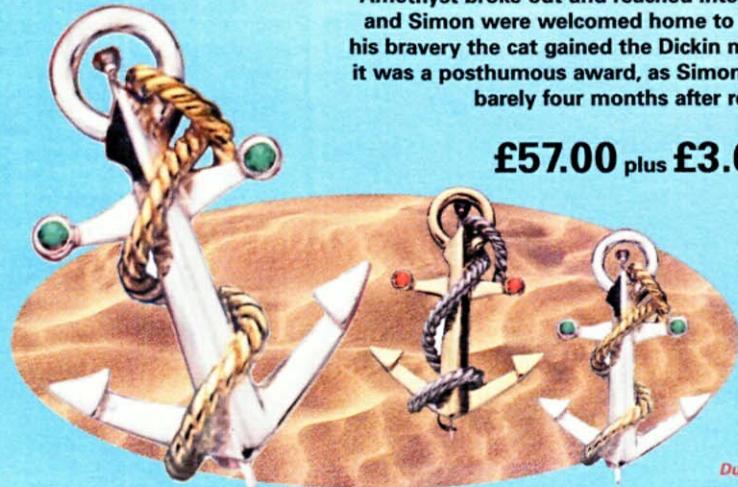
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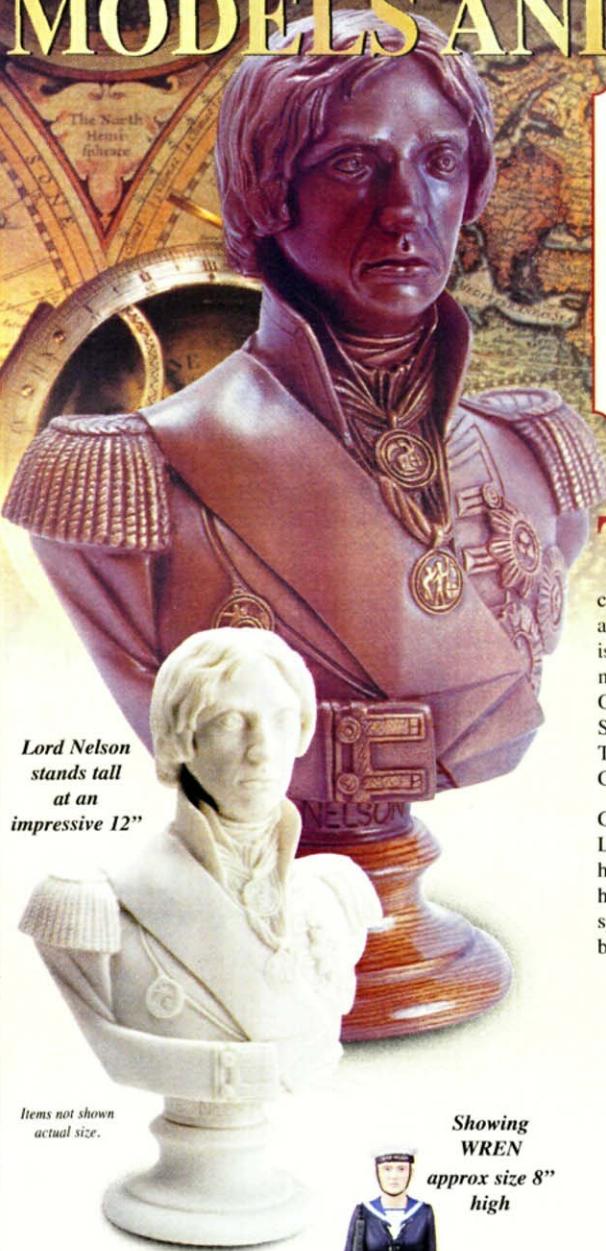
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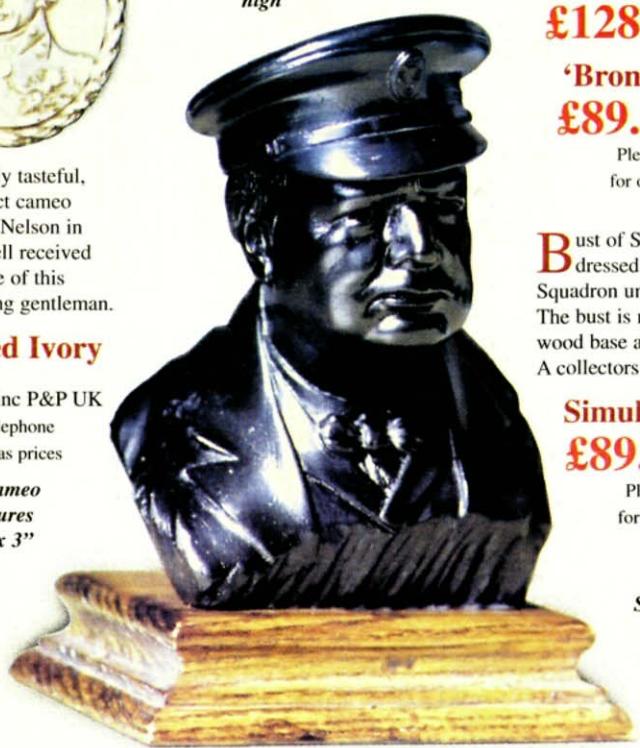


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● The Combat Information Centre on board the Dutch de Zeven Provincien-class anti-air frigates

Pictures: Royal Netherlands Navy

Tromp shows the way ahead

**Mike Gray takes
a tour of the new
Dutch air
defence ship**

THE glittering canyons and soaring edifices of London's Docklands formed the perfect setting for the overseas debut of the pride of the Dutch Navy.

HNLMs Tromp is more than just a big, powerful frigate – she is a glimpse into a future in which a number of navies, including the Royal Navy, hope to have a share.

Calling her a frigate further blurs the definitions in the maritime lexicon, because as a state-of-the-art air defence ship she is firmly in the realm of the destroyer.

But whatever her owners choose to call her, she is setting new standards, and her Commanding Officer, Capt Michiel Hijnmans, and her crew were understandably pleased to be showing their ship off in London just six days after her commissioning in Flushing.

Tromp (F801) is the latest of the de Zeven Provincien-class, displacing some 6,500 tonnes fully loaded and designed to provide cover against air and missile attack for an expeditionary amphibious force – one of the central planks of Dutch defence strategy.

She has a ship's company of less than 200, and is powered by Wartsila cruising diesels and Rolls-Royce Spey booster gas turbines.

The capabilities of her sensors are spectacular.

Her Smart-L 3-D long-range radar is capable of keeping 1,000 different tracks in the system, and in tests, according to manufacturers Thales, the radar could detect and track a towed target the size of a tennis ball at a range of 60km.

She will carry the heat-seeking Sirius long-range infra-red search and track system, which gives no signal to be picked up and is effective against sea-skimming and ballistic missiles.

The Scout surface surveillance radar, with a power output as low as a single watt, can be particularly useful during covert operations as it is almost impossible for a target to detect the radar signal.

The threat of attacks by small craft, such as in the attack on the USS Cole, is addressed by a Mirador electro-optical observation, tracking and fire-control system with daylight and night-vision capabilities.

And if the enemy gets through all that, there is always the Goalkeeper seven-barrel Gatling gun, firing up to 4,200 30mm rounds a minute, to blast a missile out of the equation.

The ship's defences and weapons are controlled in the

much of the text on their screens is in English, which makes their performance all the more remarkable.

Parts of the ship would be familiar to a member of the RN, such as the layout of the Wardroom, but then you turn a corner and see an example of modern art, such as a bas-relief on the wall.

Although Tromp is fitted with an electronic charting suite, the system is not yet fully certified, so although the electronic version is proving well up to the job, she is actually navigated on paper charts for the time being.

Ship control systems are also electronic; one operator said the automatic responses programmed into the computers to deal with situations are so fast that by the time a warning pops up on screen the problem is likely to have been fixed.

Tromp would normally carry a doctor on board, and when she deploys with a task group a dentist also joins; as one member of the crew observed, with so few people on board they each end up with about five appointments a week to keep the dentist busy ...

● The Royal
Netherlands Navy's
de Zeven Provincien-
class anti-air frigate



A life of variety in the RFANSU

THE ROYAL Fleet Auxiliary are a vital component of most Royal Navy operations, and have been proving their worth in the campaign against Iraq.

Versatile vessels such as the Fort ships Sir Bedivere and Argus not only support Royal Navy warships, but also contribute directly to the success of a mission in a secondary role – perhaps acting as mini helicopter carriers, such as the Forts and Argus, or mother-ship to a mine countermeasures squadron, like Sir Bedivere.

One point of contact between the RFA and the Royal Navy is administered from a small, little-known unit which operates out of humble offices at RN air station Culdrose in Cornwall.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary Naval Support Unit (RFANSU) started life as a very small engineering support unit covering Sea King helicopters on the back of RFAs in 1990, though they had been in business long before that in a different guise.

The aim of the 150-strong unit is to place small teams with ships to provide the kind of support which is present in the ship's company of an aircraft carrier, but would not be expected of the civilian crew of an RFA supply ship.

And by dint of flexibility of manpower and equipment, ships can be kept at sea longer – and MOD planners have been taking notice of the working practices at RFANSU.

The basic purpose of the unit is to provide Royal Navy personnel in aviation-capable RFA ships, fielding an air wing which includes specialists such as air engineers, flight deck officers and the like.

The unit has a considerable task – the Commanding Officer, currently Lt Cdr Andy Thorburn, is responsible for the headquarters at Culdrose, for all RN personnel embarked in RFAs (including administration such as pay, drafting, expenses and more), deployable Royal Navy support teams, Divisional matters and so on.

"It is a monumental administrative and logistical task – but when we send our aircraft to sea, if we at RFANSU didn't get our jobs right, then nothing could happen," said Lt Cdr Thorburn.

"It would all come to a grinding halt – which is why I am trying to further the concept of RFANSU and our business, because I think that's where the future lies."

The actual strength on each ship varies with its task and capabilities.

Argus – an aviation training ship which doubles as a primary casualty receiving ship – has up to 50 people on board, headed by the

Senior Naval Officer Argus at the rank of lieutenant commander.

"It is a very, very popular unit, with Merlin, Sea Kings, Lynx, Jungles – the boys love it, and it has a huge hangar space," said Lt Cdr Thorburn.

"It is almost like a mini-carrier, with a medical team, air operations, a Meteorology and Oceanography (METOC) officer and a large stores department, which all belong to us."

Three teams cover the permanent positions on Forts Victoria and George, auxiliary oiler replenishment ships, and they are both being adapted to be able to support Merlins. RFANSU staff are

being trained for the same aircraft.

These two ships have permanent workshops on board, obviating the need for the mobile, containerised workshops, although for other ships the five 'flying packs', covering Sea Kings and Merlins, have to be used.

But support for the RFAs runs further than just air engineering – electrical and communications specialists, weapon engineering staff to look after defensive systems such as Phalanx, weather experts to help with matters like the best track for flying operations or finding optimum conditions for replenishments at sea, and who can help with the Rapid Environmental Assessments which task group commanders rely on for successful amphibious operations.

Forts Victoria and George – the former has just undergone refit, the latter is just entering hers – have permanent teams of 17, while Forts Rosalie and Austin require nine each (but no permanent teams).

And as operational requirements change, causing aircraft carriers to operate as helicopter carriers – as is the case with HMS

Ark Royal in the Gulf – so planners are looking at how RFANSU tailors its teams to meet a specific need; such examples may provide useful pointers for operations using the future carriers.

RFANSU people are heavily involved in the war in Iraq, as they were in the 1991 Gulf War, the Adriatic in 1992-93, Operation Bolton in the Gulf in 1997-98, Kosovo in 1999 and Operation Palliser in Sierra Leone.

That means the magical figure of 40 per cent of the time spent alongside in base port, as recommended by the Second Sea Lord, proves difficult to maintain – the figure for Argus actually falls below ten per cent, while Forts Victoria and George barely manage 33 per cent – "but people are still falling over themselves to come and work with us," said Lt Cdr Thorburn.

"They love it because of the variety. And managers show a lot of imagination to get people away for courses, leave and so on – they use a roulement system.

"Because the RFA do not operate a base port system, and maximise the time units spend at sea, individual management is very important.

"We tailor their programme to suit them as best we can – someone from Hull may get time at the Hull Careers Office, for example.

"And in Argus, the Senior Naval Officer is encouraged to show flexibility in terms of leave and so on – and plenty of people extend their time on Argus.

"Our people may not spend as much time at home as is recommended – but that time is quality time, and people are happy with that."

The RFANSU has 142 people dealing with eight ships, and they are also involved in trials for the Wave-class ships which are entering service shortly.

"When I came, I could see how vital this unit was," said Lt Cdr Thorburn.

"It is a unique section that gives me a vast amount of flexibility with my teams – and I think people are looking at the way we do things and the RFANSU concept for what we will be doing in the future."

● RFA Argus in the North Arabian Gulf carrying out load transfers using a Chinook helicopter of 18 Squadron RAF currently based on board HMS Ark Royal

Picture: POA Phot Nathan Dua



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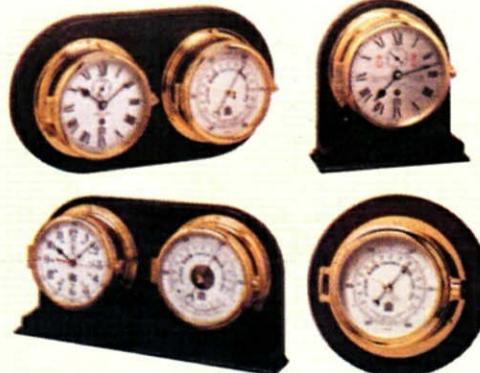
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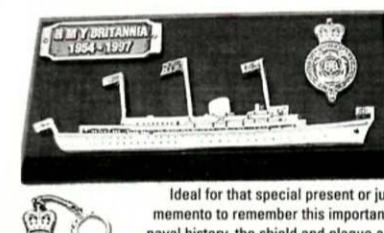
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YOUNG READERS CLUB



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LOOK TO THE SKY

Did you know the Navy has people who can tell the future...? Their job is to predict the weather - the wind, the rain, the sun, the clouds - so that our ships and aircraft can travel safely around the world. Read on to find out more about the weather and the Navy.

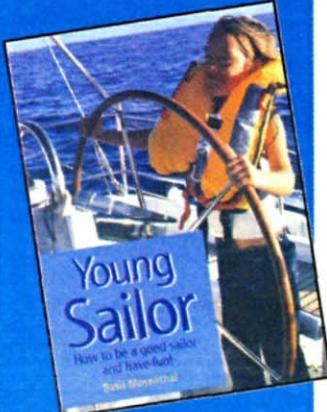
We asked one of our members to take a good look at this book and let us know what he thought. This is what he said:

The book is easy to read, with step-by-step instructions and plenty of pictures and clear diagrams.

Although I have some friends who sail, I don't - but I found the book interesting, with lots of facts about subjects like ropes, steering, navigation and flags.

It fits together like a jigsaw, and is a good introduction to sailing, and I think it would give a beginner a good start.

Matthew Gray
Mem no. 3006



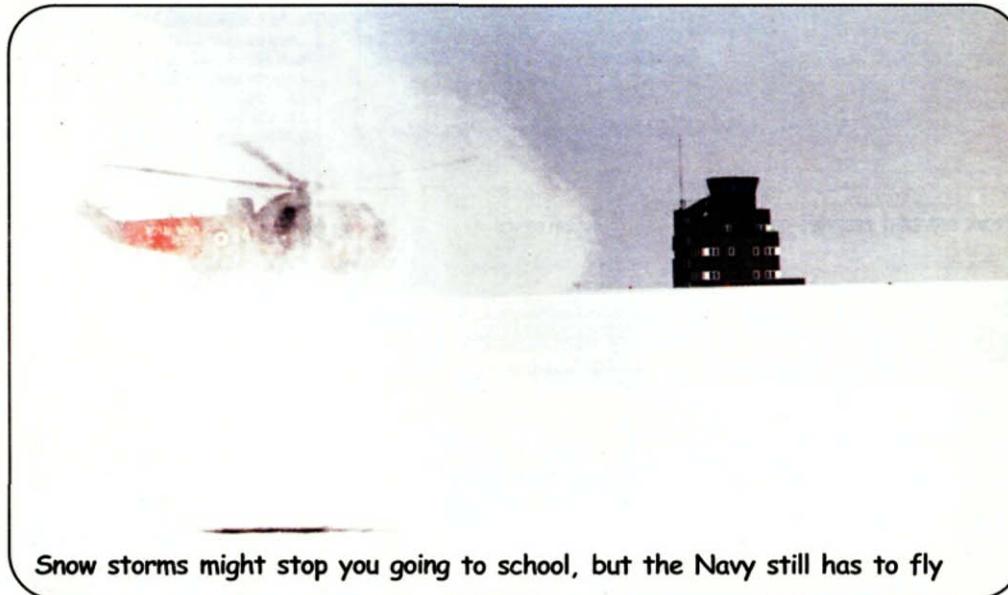
'Young Sailor: How to be a good sailor and have fun!' by Basil Mosenthal is published by Adlard Coles Nautical, www.adlardcoles.co.uk

Who's that?

You might have noticed a new face appearing on these pages this May - meet 'The Kid'.

He normally appears in the Naval Quirks cartoon on page 29, but with his deep interest in the Royal Navy we're sure he reads the Young Readers pages every month.

So we've asked him to join the club and appear on our pages...



Navy has got weathermen like no others

The Royal Navy is the only one of the three Armed Forces that has its very own full-time uniformed weather forecasters.

They are specialists in what's called HM, that stands for hydrography, meteorology and oceanography (so what happened to the O?).

All those ographies and ologies mean people who study the weather, the waters of the oceans, and the depth of the seas.

So why is the weather included with studies of the ocean? Because the weather affects tides and currents in the sea, and that affects the

Navy's ships and submarines.

The weather also has a big impact on flying, and that matters for both helicopters and aeroplanes.

So a large ship like aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal will have a forecaster on board who has lots of different jobs.

He or she will prepare weather forecasts for the aircraft that fly from the carrier.

And these aircraft don't just fly over the sea, they fly over the land where the weather can be totally different.

The forecaster also needs to predict what

the weather will be like for the carrier itself, so they can plan things like port visits and exercises.

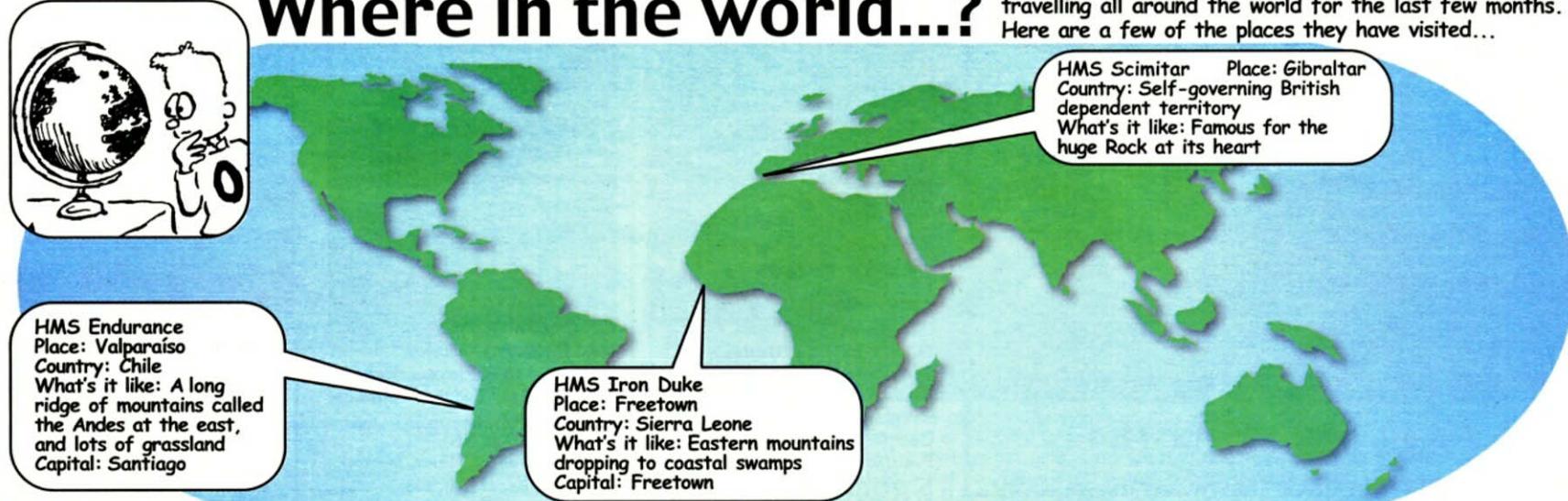
Helicopters also fly from amphibious ships like HMS Albion but this type of assault ship can carry out beach landings.

This means that the forecaster needs to be able to say what the surf and waves will be like on the beach for the people going ashore.

Naval forecasters work in all sorts of ships, but also ashore at the Naval Air Stations Culdrose, Yeovilton and Prestwick and at headquarters around the world.

what is scuttlebutt? It's a word used in the Navy to mean gossip.

Where in the world...?



All our thoughts to those in the Gulf

A lot of our Young Readers have got brothers and sisters, mums and dads who are serving with the British Armed Forces out in the Gulf right now.

The Royal Navy, Army and RAF have all been part of the war in Iraq against Saddam Hussein.

Members of the Young Readers club have asked to send a message to everyone out there who has been serving their country and doing their duty at a difficult and scary time.

Best wishes to all of you, and we want to let you know that those back home are thinking of you.



We've teamed up with Universal Pictures Video to give away 5 video's and 5 DVD's of Sitting Ducks - Duck Cravings

Out to buy now, Sitting Ducks features Bill (the duck) and his best friend Aldo (the alligator) and their many comical adventures in Ducktown.

For your chance to win just send us a postcard or email marked 'Sitting Ducks' and answer the following question.

Q. Where do Bill and Aldo live?

Please state whether you would like to win a video or DVD. Don't forget to include your name, address, age and membership number. The competition closing date is 30 May 2003. Normal competition rules apply.

Members birthdays

Here's our May birthday list. Best wishes to you all from Navy News:

Barney Adams
Grace Anderson
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Andrew Bignell
Ben Bingham
Cheryl-May Buque
Joshua Child
Freddie Collins
Richard Corscaden
Jessica Desmond
Alexander Drake
Tamar Elderton
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Callum George
Jamie Grant
Sarah Green
Paul Gregory
Zoe Hall
Joshua Harrison
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Nathan Phillips
Benjamin Riddleston
Tanya Ridge
Joshua Sanbrooke
Karl Shearer
Kirsty Short
Matthew Simmance
Scott Sutton
Stephen Turnbull
James Warren
Michael West
Gareth Williams
Adam Willson
James Woolley

If we've missed out your birthday, please write in and let us know. We don't want anyone to feel forgotten!





Big balloons tell future

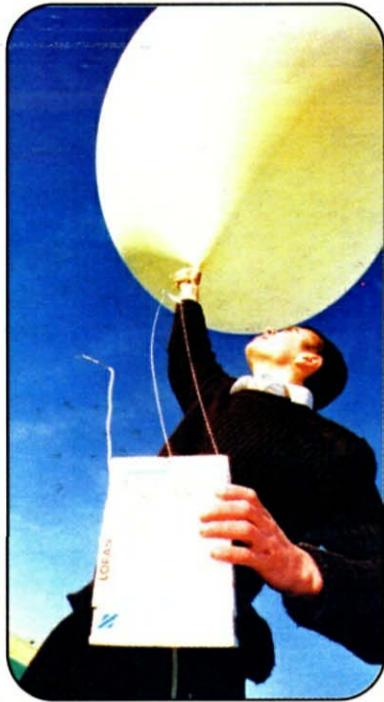
The Navy uses giant weather balloons to predict what will happen in the skies.

Up to four times a day at weather stations around the world and from some Navy ships, these huge balloons are let loose to float high into the heavens.

Each balloon carries a radiosonde, which is a device that has lots of sensors to measure things like temperature and humidity - that's how cold and how damp the sky is.

The radiosonde also sends back radio signals that mean the path of the balloon can be tracked. This data is then used to tell wind speed and direction high in the atmosphere.

All this information is helpful for people who are flying in any sort of aircraft and for forecasters to predict what the weather will be.



This month

1 May 1891: The Gunnery School was commissioned as HMS Excellent on Whale Island in Portsmouth

1 May 1980: Commando Group Royal Marines formed, adopting many of 43 Commando's traditions

2 May 1912: A Short S38 aircraft was the first plane to launch from a ship under way

4 May 1910: The start of the Royal Canadian Navy

6 May 1910: Accession of King George V, the sailor king

7 May 1765: HMS Victory launched at Chatham

7 May 1947: The Navy's first full helicopter squadron, 705 NAS, formed

8 May 1945: The end of World War II in Europe

18 May 1803: Nelson hoisted his flag for the last time in HMS Victory

19 May 1797: The first recorded 'splicing of the main brace' in HMS Cumberland, when everyone on board is given a tot of rum

20 May 1903: The Royal Navy Band Service formed

24 May 1941: HMS Hood sunk and Prince of Wales damaged by German battleship Bismarck

24 May 1967: The last ship to be built at Portsmouth Dockyard, HMS Andromeda, was launched

26 May 1940: Evacuation of the British Forces from Dunkirk begins

31 May 1916: The Battle of Jutland

who

are strawberry mivvies? It is naval slang for civvies or civilians, that's people who don't work in the Armed Forces.



Military connection for climate forecasters

Did you know that the weathermen and women who work for the Met Office are connected to the military?

The Met Office used to be an agency, and is now a trading fund, of the Ministry of Defence - that's the government department to which the Navy, the Army and the RAF all belong.

The Met Office started back in 1854 to offer information on the weather and sea currents to people who travelled on the sea.

In World War I, all three Services in the military developed their own weather experts.

Now the Met Office supplies weather data to all three Services.

Keeping a close eye on the ice

Remember HMS Endurance, the survey ship that goes down to Antarctica every year and brings back those wonderful pictures of penguins and seals?

Well, her real job is to survey the frozen south, studying the ice conditions at the bottom of the world at the South Pole.

Antarctica is the name of the continent that surrounds the South Pole, and it has the coldest weather in the world.

It was in Antarctica in 1960 that the lowest temperature ever was recorded - an incredibly chilly minus 87.8 degrees Centigrade.

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NEXT MONTH

Do you know what 'Uckers' is? With a name like that, it could be anything... Well, it's a game played by the Navy, and our June pages will tell you more.

Competition rules:

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Sea Cadets



Pancake Day has Iron Dukes turned into Aunt Bessies

'AUNT BESSIE' was the rig of the day when Hull Unit TS Iron Duke celebrated Shrove Tuesday in the traditional manner with a pancake tossing evolution.

Picture: Hull Daily Mail

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Tigers make up in quality for what they lack in size

DESPITE being a small unit ravaged by floods, the foot and mouth epidemic (when they could not use their HQ) and vandals, TS Tiger from Chippenham swept the board at the South West Area Drill and Piping competition at HMS Raleigh.

RESULTS:

TS Tiger triumphed as Best Small Drill Squad; Best Dressed Small Drill Squad; Best Dressed Small Drill Squad Member (Cadet Kieran Murphy); Best Small Drill Squad Commander (PO Cadet Martin Rivers);

Best Piping Team; Best Dressed Piping Team; Best Piper (Cadet Chris Whitting); Best Piper Runner-Up (LC Ricky Cole); Best Dressed Piper (LC Ricky Cole); Best Dressed Piper Runner Up (Cadet Chris Whitting).





ROYAL SALUTE TO 42 YEARS

ADMIRAL of the Sea Cadets The Duke of York called on Swindon Unit TS Resolution to mark the retirement of Lt Cdr Richard Jagger after 42 years as Chairman of the Management Committee.

He presented him with a framed certificate of appreciation.

Here the Duke is seen with Lt Cdr Jagger (left) and the unit CO Lt Owen Curtis, enjoying TS Resolution's skit entitled 'Why Join the Sea Cadets?'

2SL thanks instructor for prompt action

Marching orders!

TAKING time out from the National Drill and Piping Contest (see below) to instruct four-year-old Nicola Parry are Holly Oxley and Rosie Granger.



'Emigrating? Not yet you're you're not!' Steph's told . . .

LED by their Guard Commander, LC Martin Mainwood, and trained by drill instructor PO Craig Roberts, TS Kingfisher's armed guard swept all before them at the National Drill and Piping Competition at HMS Raleigh.

The team began training towards the end of last year in eager anticipation of the Warwickshire District Drill competition – where their hard work paid off with an emphatic win.

Three weeks and a lot more graft later, the mini bus and trailer were packed and ready to travel to HMS Raleigh for the SW Area competition. Again Redditch and Bromsgrove proved their worth by becoming Area Champions.

Cleaning, sewing, pressing and polishing again became the order of the day as

the Area's Best Guard prepared for the big one – the National Competition.

With everything almost ready, alarming news reached the Unit – a key member of the team was about to emigrate to Australia!

Frantic phone calls ensued and the flights were put back to March 30. There was just time for AC Stephanie Green to take part before she flew off Down Under.

LC Mainwood accepted the prize for Best Armed Guard from Admiral of the Fleet Sir Julian Oswald – who also handed him the prize for National Guard Commander.

● And AC Green was also singled out by Admiral Oswald to be presented with a framed photo of the unit (right).

A QUICK-THINKING Sea Cadet instructor has received a top award from the Royal Navy after his prompt action saved three cadets from a possible watery grave as their boat began to sink.



Matthew Guest (18) was supervising members of Gosport unit afloat in Portsmouth Harbour when from his safety boat he saw two girls and a boy plunged into the water as their small dinghy began to founder.

He accelerated his boat to the rescue, observing that one girl could not swim and was shouting desperately for help.

Matthew said later: "I was doing one last check for everyone on the water in my rigid inflatable and saw that a boat full of older lads was messing around near one of ours.

"They were being really reckless and ended up swamping it and nearly sunk it by speeding dangerously close and creating waves which went over the side of the boat.

"Very quickly the cadets' boat filled with water and two girls and one lad were left splashing in the water.

"All I could see were three heads and the bow of the tender above the water.

"I sped over and could hear one of the girls shouting that she couldn't swim.

"She panicked and I don't think she would have kept afloat long. I pulled them all into my boat and took them to shore where they were alright in the end, but a bit shocked. I was lucky I was in the right place at the right time."

The Harbour Police investigated the incident as a possible malicious sinking, but the suspects were never identified.

Matthew's act was rewarded at a ceremony on board HMS Victory in Portsmouth Naval Base.

He was presented with a commendation by Vice Admiral James Burnell-Nugent – who as Second Sea Lord is the Royal Navy's principal personnel officer and so ultimately responsible for all the UK's Sea Cadet Units.



Sport

Badminton

RAF HALTON was the venue for the recent Inter-Service badminton championships.

The event was dominated by the RAF who were triumphant in all competitions but the Navy team fought hard to win second place over the Army.

This was the first time for over ten years that the Navy had beaten the Army overall, winning the men's, ladies' and mixed events to secure a 21 to 13 victory.

A successful five days was crowned with Lt Cdr David Hill (815 NAS), Lt Jo Webber (824 NAS), POPT Steve Losh (Neptune), LS Gary Pearce (Comstriker) and AEM Laurence Seaman (Sultan) all being selected for the Combined Services squad.

League season starts at Sultan

HMS SULTAN is due to play host to the first trophy competition of the new rugby league season with 12 teams confirmed for the all-day event on Wednesday May 7.

The day will start with the teams gathering for the draw at around 09:00 with the final scheduled to kick off at 16:30.

Sultan's own team led by Navy skipper App Neil Chapman are probable favourites as they have seen action already this season in both 9-a-side and full team matches.

The 9s squad represented the Royal Navy at the recent SEME 9s played at Bordon Camp and despite losing out in the cup competition the team won their next three matches to meet a heavier and more experienced Army side from Ireland in the final.

Somewhat overawed in the early stages Sultan fell behind by two tries at the break.

Another try early in the second half put Sultan further behind, however some 'professionalism' by the Army in trying to slow the game down only served to fire up the Sultan team in what became an incredible comeback spree with just five minutes to go until the end of the match.

Neil Chapman's try after gathering the kick-off inspired Sultan to score a further two tries in quick succession to tie the game with a minute to go.

An error by the Army gave Sultan the ball from the scrum and experienced Navy full-back MEM Buck Taylor beat the by-now sluggish defence with a perfectly weighted kick.

Gathering the ball himself Buck left the opposition defence streaming behind him as he went for what proved to be the winning score.

A tremendous victory away from home highlights the efforts put in at unit level by Neil Chapman and

Mark Brocklesby and the team at HMS Sultan.

To rub even more salt in the Army's wounds Sultan took on SEME in a return 13-a-side match at Sultan and came out on top of a dour physical struggle, winning with a score of 18 to 12.

The Sultan team hold regular training sessions on Thursday evenings with new faces always welcome to bolster the team's numbers.

Information can be gained from LPT Mark Brocklesby at the SARC at HMS Sultan in Gosport.

For those on the Portsmouth side of the harbour the Portsmouth Command Academy hold training sessions on Monday evenings at HMS Temeraire starting at 17:00.

Full coaching is available in all areas of the game as well as a chance to improve all-round fitness levels.

Further information can be obtained from CPO Jan Furse on military dial: 9380 2770.

Hot bears in cold climate

TWO Naval personnel from the Joint Services Signal Unit in Cyprus jetted off to Banff in Canada for Exercise Hot Bear, experiencing a range of wintry activities in the chilly Canadian Rocky Mountains.

Fourteen spaces were available to military personnel at the base on the expedition which was organised by Staff Sergeant Jonathan Driver at the unit.

In the joint expedition the Navy twosome were joined by their Army and RAF colleagues.



Knife-edge games for rugby team

TWO tough matches have tested the mettle of the Royal Navy Rugby Union side but ultimately the power of the Senior Service won through, securing victory in the nail-biting final moments of play.

A hard fought game against Irish Defence Force (IDF) ended with an uplifting victory for the RN team.

This match proved a precursor to the polarised battle against the RAF where a strong Navy team dominated the first half before their RAF rivals pulled back and regrouped to challenge the Navy's superiority and almost claw back the winner's laurels.

In Ireland at the end of March the Navy were worthy winners, albeit with only a small points differential. The Irish Army band welcomed the players on to the pitch with national anthems before a minute's silence for the victims of the conflict in Iraq.

It was 15 minutes into play before the Irish put up the first points. Dave Jones, playing at outside centre, began running good lines for the Navy. On the half hour Fly Half Paul Clark kicked 40 yards into touch to set up a line 10 yards out.

Winning their throw the Irish got turned over in the ruck allowing Scrum Half Dave Pascoe a run through the defence. Clark passed out to Bob Armstrong who passed out to Jones for the Navy's try.

The half-time score stood at 5 all. The IDF regained their lead on 45 minutes with a penalty. On 50 minutes Clark's kicking for touch won another territorial advantage, all to come to naught.

Only two minutes later the Navy were again on a drive to the line, and a penalty award came with a 2 on 1 with the opposition full back. Pascoe converted for 3 points.

The last ten minutes were a joy to watch. Drop goal attempts were missed, penalties were tapped or missed and the Navy just got the upper edge. A drive by Marc Salama was stopped by illegal holding on, allowing the penalty that was needed for victory with just five minutes to go. Pascoe slotted the pressure kick effortlessly.

The last few minutes needed cool heads and Clark again kicked for territory with pinpoint accuracy. The game finished with a tight score of 8-11 in the Navy's favour.

The match against the RAF on April 9 truly proved 'a game of two halves'. After a storming Navy first half, with the halftime score at 26-0, the RAF came back to close



● Navy pushing back the pressure late in the game against the RAF: Navy rugby captain PO Nick Bartlett leans on the scrum

the score to within 5 points before the game was sealed on 75 minutes by a long-range try by Navy winger Simon Channing.

A full festival of rugby was organised by the RAF at Newbury RFC. *Eastenders* star Nick Bailey, who plays Dr Anthony Truman, was on hand to watch the game and drafted in to choose Portsmouth's Sammy Rankin as the Navy's Twickenham mascot.

A crowd of at least 750 watched the main match. Swelled by buses of supporters from establishments the RN crowd was certainly more vocal than the RAF.

The first 20 minutes were all one-way traffic with the Navy dominating. However the Navy were unable to cross the line and Scrum Half Pascoe slotted 3 penalties to get the score going.

It was 25 minutes before the RAF first probed into the Navy half. Massive defence, particularly by new caps Marc Salama and Neil Williams, saw off this attack.

A chip from halfway by fellow new Navy cap Paul Clark went clean over the defence. He re-gathered the ball after the bounce to pass on to Bob Armstrong, coming through at pace for the try that was converted by Pascoe.

On 33 minutes an RAF flanker was sin-binned for taking a man out without the ball and Pascoe scored from the resulting penalty.

The Navy's second try came in response to a break into their territory, with Parker turning the resulting scrummages into advantage. Once more Pascoe converted. The half-time score was 0-26 and the crowd were on a high.

The RAF were on the rampage from the whistle, dominating territorially and in possession. Their efforts in the second half pushed the score up to 17-26. Pascoe bolstered the Navy score with another 3-pointer but then a fluff by the Navy saw the ball kicked into the 'in goal' area by the RAF.

Now at 24-29 the last 15 minutes were going to be tight. Big hits and massive kicks were traded between the two sides. Hard work by all kept the snapping jaws of the RAF out of the goal area – just.

As the clock ticked on the Navy were hanging on to their lead, but the RAF were deep inside the Navy's 22, when suddenly Simon Channing made an interception.

As he tried to fly-hack the ball ahead it bounced into his arms and he had a clear 80 yards to run the touchline. With the Navy crowd willing him along Channing saw off two RAF pursuers to touch down to a vast cheer. Although the conversion was missed, the 10-point gap gave breathing space.

But the RAF still bit back with a penalty on 77 minutes. In the final minutes, the Navy were forced to defend again. Two Navy forwards were sin-binned and the RAF saw the scrummage advantage.

Just 15 yards out on 97 minutes the RAF won the scrum. Choosing to force the draw they spun the ball out wide, but the next pass failed to make safe hands.

As the final whistle blew the crowd rose as one after a spectacle of brilliant rugby by both sides.

Tough road to victory

IN A FAIR but hard final battle HMS Sultan came out trumps in the Lambs Navy Cup Hockey Final 2003.

Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth were their rivals in the final held on February 26 at Burnaby Road in Portsmouth.

Both teams had a difficult fight to reach the final with Dartmouth defeating CTCRM, HMS Seahawk and HMS Drake, while Sultan had to overcome JSU Northwood, HMS Collingwood and HMS Nelson.

The final saw Sultan the overall victors with a score of 4 to 1.

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Downfall does not hinder ball skills

THE FIRST match of the Inter-Services football competition took place in Portsmouth with the Senior Service hosting the Army.

On a miserable evening of pouring rain and biting wind, the two teams served up an excellent match with passing moves that defied the conditions.

The Navy started well, quickly settling into a pattern of quick passing and incisive movement that created numerous chances in the first 15 minutes, and buoying up the staunch supporters who braved the foul weather to lend their support.

Students of the Royal Marines School of Music gathered in the main stand providing volume to the support with renditions of many Navy classics mixed in with the odd football standard.

POPT Fraser Quirke (HMS Temeraire) recently returned from injury and looked sharp up front, and with the probing runs of CPO Nigel Thwaites (HMS Lancaster) the two combined to stretch the Army rearguard on numerous occasions as the hosts dominated.

But their only reward was a well-taken goal by Quirke after 12 minutes – after some slick passing the striker struck a crisp half-volley from 15 yards into the Army net.

And the failure to turn early supremacy into goals was highlighted by the need for Navy keeper OM Jamie McGall (HMS Newcastle) to make two good saves from Pte Neil Bartlett as the half drew to a close.

The soldiers appear to have taken a bit of an ear-bashing at the interval as they came out fired up and ready to counter the Navy's dominance.

Within two minutes they were almost level, with only an athletic save by McGall denying Bartlett again.

The next 20 minutes were a real struggle for the Navy as the Army swarmed forward, with McGall denying both Bartlett and striking partner Cpl John Stephenson.

The continued rain made the surface slick and mistimed tackles brought a flurry of bookings for both sides as they sought control of the midfield in the final 20 minutes or so.

The Navy seemed to have weathered the storm and began to counter quickly, and only a slip at a crucial moment denied Quirke a second goal.

The Army brought on an extra striker in an attempt to rescue the game, and the tactic paid off when the visitors got a deserved equaliser in the 85th minute, Bartlett forcing home a half-volley from ten yards out.

A frantic final five minutes saw the Navy reduced to ten men when Mne Graham Carr was sent off for a second bookable offence, but the defence held firm with McGall making two more crucial saves, and confirmed the Navy keeper as Elite Teamwear Ltd Man of the Match.

Festival of wind

THE ROYAL Naval Sailing Association Windsurfing Festival will take place at Poole, Dorset, on May 31 and June 1.

For those who have always wanted to have a go, the Navy's top instructors will be on hand for beginners' taster sessions and for the more proficient, windsurfing guru Peter Hart will be giving tips.

For more information contact CPO Dave Strudwick at Collingwood on 93822 5016.

Snow turns to sun for mountaineers

WITH THE weather improving and the nights drawing out, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Mountaineering Club is beginning to change its focus from winter to summer climbing activities.

While poor snow conditions meant that the first of the club's meets at the CIC Hut on Ben Nevis had to be cancelled, the other two winter meets took place in good winter-climbing conditions.

With one meet based at Pine Cottage in Newtonmore and the other at the CIC Hut, it allowed both Naval and Marine members of the club to enjoy some of the very best routes offered by the Scottish mountains in winter.

A full rock meets programme has been planned for the year starting off with two

meets either end of May. The first aims to enjoy the early sun on the superb sea cliffs of Cornwall around Lands End, while the second will visit the Peak District and one of the 'meccas' of UK climbing, Stanage Edge.

The meets programme has recently been issued in the club bulletin and is available on the website at [rnmmc.co.uk](http://www.rnmmc.co.uk).

Adrian Berry, one of the UK's top climbers and former member of the British team, held a training weekend for some of the club's climbers. Using the climbing wall at Calshot near Southampton as a base he passed on many useful tips to improve technique.

The indoor competition due to be held on May 14 has had to be postponed until later in the year due to some members' absence.

Irish hammer wins boxing's English title

FISTS flew and crowds cheered as Royal Navy boxers achieved their first national champion in 15 years and the only Service national champion this year.

The Royal Navy Boxing Association are celebrating after Marine Mick 'The Irish Hammer' O'Connell won the ABA Heavyweight title on Friday April 4 at the York Hall in London's Bethnal Green.

The competition was England international Michael Stafford, ranked No.2 in Great Britain, of the Liverpool-based Kirby Amateur Boxing Club.

O'Connell put in a winning performance by beating his opponent 15 points to 12 in an exciting and occasionally brutal national final.

The marine's non-stop action style took its toll on the Northern champion as O'Connell kept him trapped on the ropes, unleashing fast and accurate combinations to the head and body.

It has been over 15 years since the Royal Navy has had a national boxing champion, and 27 years since two Naval boxers have reached the national finals in the same year.

For the second Navy boxer in the championship final was OM Neil 'Bazooka' Suku who took on Great Britain No.1 David Price from the Salisbury Amateur Boxing Club in Liverpool.

The 6ft 8in super-heavyweight champion was made to work to keep his title as Suku bombarded him with relentless attacks.

After a hard-fought contest, Price took a points win of 20-15 over his naval opponent.

Navy Coach POPT Q Shillingford said: "Neil has taken great steps to reach this far in this year's national championships – you must remember Suku has only had three senior contests and all of them have been against the best in the country.

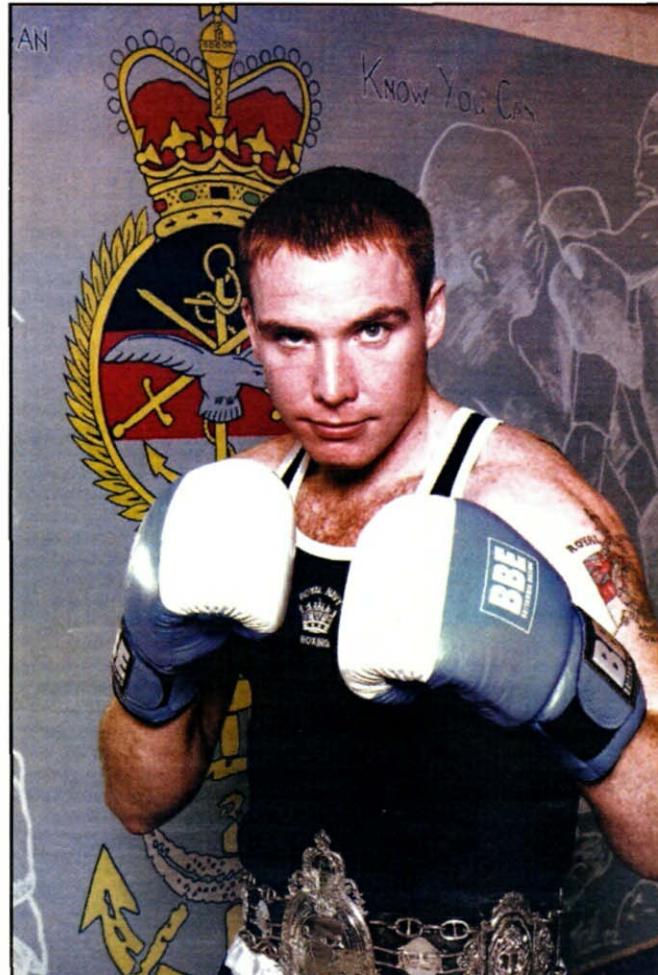
"OM Suku is a great prospect and I can see him achieving a lot for Navy sport."

Away from the English finals, Scottish internationals Marine Jim 'The Thin Destroyer' Cusick boxed against Scottish international and champion Dave Murphy at welterweight in this year's contest.

The Scottish champion won on a very close points decision but not before Cusick had put him through four rounds fought at a ferocious pace, both boxers throwing hard and heavy blows.

Both Marines are expected to get their Scottish international call-up in the near future.

Meanwhile at the Welsh championships, Marine Dave 'The



● Mne Mick 'The Irish Hammer' O'Connell, England ABA champion

in the second round.

In the semifinal Green took on Scottish champion and Commonwealth medallist Paul Hasty.

Four rounds of non-stop action ensued, both boxers delivering combinations and heavy blows.

In the end Green was considered unlucky not to get the decision.

Mne Jim 'The Thin Destroyer' Cusick boxed against Scottish international and champion Dave Murphy at welterweight in this year's contest.

The Scottish champion won on a very close points decision but not before Cusick had put him through four rounds fought at a ferocious pace, both boxers throwing hard and heavy blows.

Both Marines are expected to get their Scottish international call-up in the near future.

Meanwhile at the Welsh championships, Marine Dave 'The

Hurricane' Tang impressed the national coach so much that his efforts have gained him an opportunity to represent Wales in their next match against Ireland.

Tang is overjoyed with his selection as he prepares for his international debut.

As the boxing season draws to a close, the Navy team are preparing for their last two events.

The first is a five-bout box-off against the Army at the Café Royal in London on May 7.

The event will be sponsored by *The Sun* newspaper and will be televised on *Sky Sports* who are hoping to beam the signal out to the fleet in the Gulf.

The second event will see the team travel to Scotland to take on a national squad.

Q said: "The results have been tremendous, the lads have had a very hard and tough season taking on the best boxers from all over the country."

Sport



County side prove tough opener for Navy golfers

A VERY strong Cornwall county golf team proved a little too much for the Navy in the first match of the new season played at West Cornwall Golf Club, writes RNGA Secretary, Cdr Gary Skinnis.

Cold but fine weather prevailed over the weekend and Navy selectors had the opportunity for an early season look at no less than 15 of the squad, an excellent turn out in the current climate.

The course was in fine shape although a very strong easterly wind all weekend made for tough playing conditions.

Following the traditional club match on the Saturday, the team engaged in seven foursome encounters against the county the following morning.

Sgt Ned Kelly (RNAS Yeovilton), an ex-RN footballer, was making his debut following his elevation to the squad on the back of an excellent RN Championship last year.

Teamed with fellow 'bootie' C/Sgt Martin Sharp (CTCRN) they battled gallantly but lost narrowly.

Unfortunately only one win was recorded by the Navy in foursomes, but what a scalp it turned out to be.

MEA Adam Hawkins (HMS Sultan) and current Navy Champion MEM Michael Setterfield (RM Poole) found themselves pitched against current Walker Cup player Philip Rowe and his partner.

A close encounter ended successfully on the final green, the Navy pair winning by two holes.

Lunch had a good effect on the Navy team, and the afternoon singles performance was very encouraging.

With 15 points at stake, the county strength in depth was expected to control proceedings. To a great extent it did, but there were some very close matches and the RN side managed a very creditable six points, making the overall result 15-7 in the county's favour.

Former Navy champion Lt Cdr Darryl Whitehead, now serving in Portugal, led from the front in the top match, winning 3/2.

LMA Scott Gilbert (DSMC Fort Blockhouse) then produced an excellent final green success, having been four down at one stage and Sgt Joe Sharp (CTCRM) followed him in with a two-hole victory.

Navy Veteran Cdr Ian Yuill (CINCFLEET) produced the most emphatic Navy win of the day with a 5 and 4 triumph, and his lead was followed by C/Sgt "Smiler" Whitehouse who proved an exemplary anchor with a 3/2 win.

The Navy's other point in the afternoon came courtesy of two halved matches from Lt Terry Taylor (RNAS Culdrose) and CWEA Steve King (CFM Portsmouth).

The latter was most noteworthy by the fact that CWEA King had fought back from being dormy 3 down.

As always, both club and county proved to be most hospitable hosts for the weekend, and this now traditional season opener has become a firm favourite with both sides.

Attention now turns in earnest towards another busy Navy golf season.

The ladies have a full programme, and with a new 3 handicap player together with the re-emergence of Wendy Briggs, possibilities of success look promising.

The ladies hold their championships at Corhampton Golf Club on Friday May 23, and this is followed by squad coaching the next day and a club match on Sunday.

Anyone interested should contact Lt Cdr Isobel Kent, RNGA Ladies Secretary, on Portsmouth Naval Base (military dial) 9374.

Key events in the men's calendar are the Navy Cup final at SPNRC, June 18, RN Championships week at Broadstone GC, June 30 to July 4, and the combined men and ladies Inter-Services Championships at Saunton GC that run from September 8 to 11.

As usual, there are a limited number of individual entries available to non-Command selected personnel to play in the strokeplay part of the men's championships.

Anyone with a handicap of 10 or better wishing to be considered for one of these slots should contact their RNGA Command Secretary or the RNGA Secretary on Portsmouth Naval Base (military dial) 9380 27880.

Provisional applications pending command team selections are welcome.

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Some ships to return, others to carry on

WITH the rapid success of coalition forces in toppling Saddam Hussein, Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon has said a number of units can carry on with other tasking or return to the UK.

In a statement to the House of Commons, he said: "I am delighted to confirm our participation in Exercise Flying Fish under the Five Power Defence Arrangements with forces from Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and New Zealand.

"HMS Marlborough and HMS Liverpool together with RFA Grey Rover have been released from operations in the Middle East and will now proceed to the Far East.

"The Government attaches great importance to this long-planned deployment which sends a clear signal demonstrating our continuing commitment to the FPDA and the wider security of the region as a whole."

"Other maritime assets will be released as appropriate, for return to the UK or onward deployment.

"On current plans, HMS Ark Royal with elements of her group will leave the Joint Operations Area and start their return passage to the UK.

"Significant maritime forces will remain in the Gulf to continue important continuing tasks, including mine clearance operations, logistic support and force protection.

"It is our policy to deploy personnel on operations for no longer than is necessary to achieve our military objectives. We will therefore continue to adjust our forces deployed to the

Gulf as appropriate, withdrawing units whose tasks are complete, and in due course replacing those whose tasks continue."

Among the ships returning from the Gulf region was HMS Cardiff. During six months away, the Type 42 destroyer prevented more than £2 million of illegal cargo being smuggled out of Iraq before the war started.

Her crew enforced UN regulations by boarding suspect vessels leaving and entering the Gulf and managed to stifle trade in illicit goods.

Cardiff's deployment was part of the long-standing UN commitment in the region known as the Asirilla Patrol. She has not been involved in the war against Iraq.

Her Commanding Officer, Capt Tim Fraser, said his crew

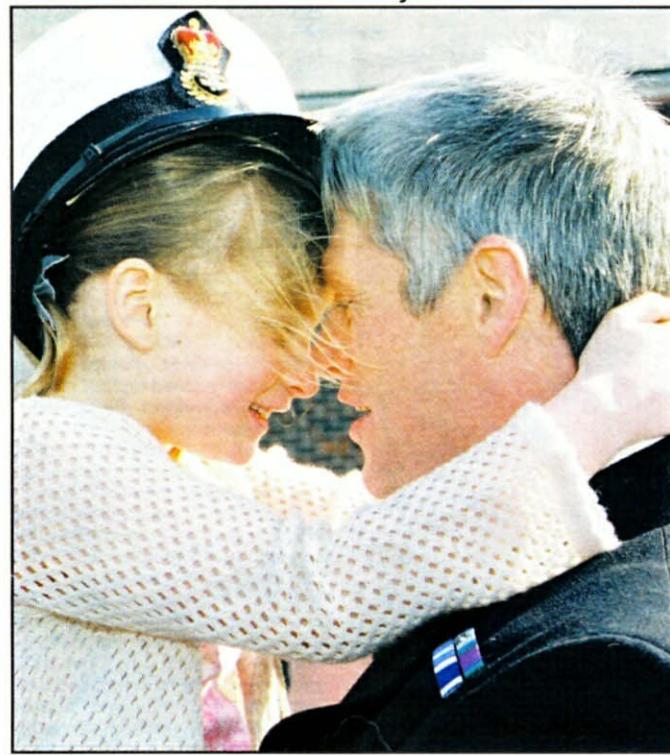
were glad to be back after a busy and demanding operation during which they had boarded 178 vessels and seized more than 25,000 tonnes of oil.

"Every single member of the ship's company played an integral part in keeping HMS Cardiff on task," he said.

"The work was challenging but rewarding and we felt we were helping to support the diplomatic efforts to find a peaceful solution to the crisis."

HMS Cardiff handed over her Armilla duties in March to HMS Richmond.

● **WELCOME BACK, DAD:** CPOEM David Young of HMS Cardiff is reunited with his daughter Katherine and wife Joanne after six months away in the Gulf



Prince of Wales meets King of Trinidad

THE PRINCE of Wales, escorted by Cdre Tony Johnstone-Burt, talks to Officer Cadet Zak King of the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard at Lord High Admiral's Divisions at Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth.



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ALBION DEBUTS AT DEVONPORT

THE ROYAL Navy's new assault ship HMS Albion sailed into Plymouth Sound last month for the first visit to the city which will be her home for up to 30 years.

Albion displaces 18,500 tons and can carry up to 700 Royal Marine commandos and up to 60 vehicles, ranging from trucks to battle tanks.

She carries eight new landing craft to move men and equipment ashore quickly, and can also operate large troop-carrying helicopters to deliver an airborne assault.

She also has the biggest and most sophisticated command centre afloat in the Royal Navy.

Defence Procurement Minister Lord Bach said: "HMS Albion will be a pivotal element of the MOD's amphibious warfare capabilities when she enters service later this year, and a tribute to the workforce at her ship-builders, BAE Systems at Barrow-in-Furness.

"She will be based in

our centre of excellence for amphibious warfare.

"Many of the ships and men and women of the Royal Navy and 3 Cdo Bde based in Plymouth and the West of England are engaged in operations within and around Iraq. We are pleased with the progress of the campaign so far."

Following the official handover and after further trials, HMS Albion should go into service in July.



'Wren' lost in title change

The 'W' prefix, left over from the WRNS and denoting 'Wren' in a female rating's rate, has been removed from their titles.

As part of the Navy's new personnel management system TOPMAST it has been decided that the gender specification is unnecessary.

From now on this will only be identified through the Service Number (usually pre-fixed 'V' for female officers and 'W' for ratings).

The Women's Royal Naval Service was disbanded in 1993 once women had become fully integrated in the Royal Navy.

ART AND GLASS

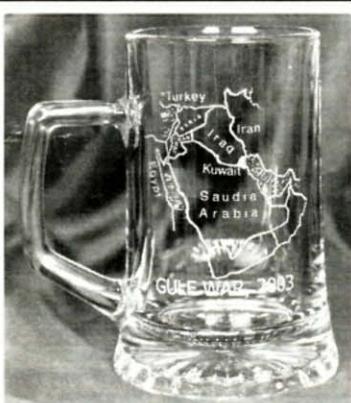
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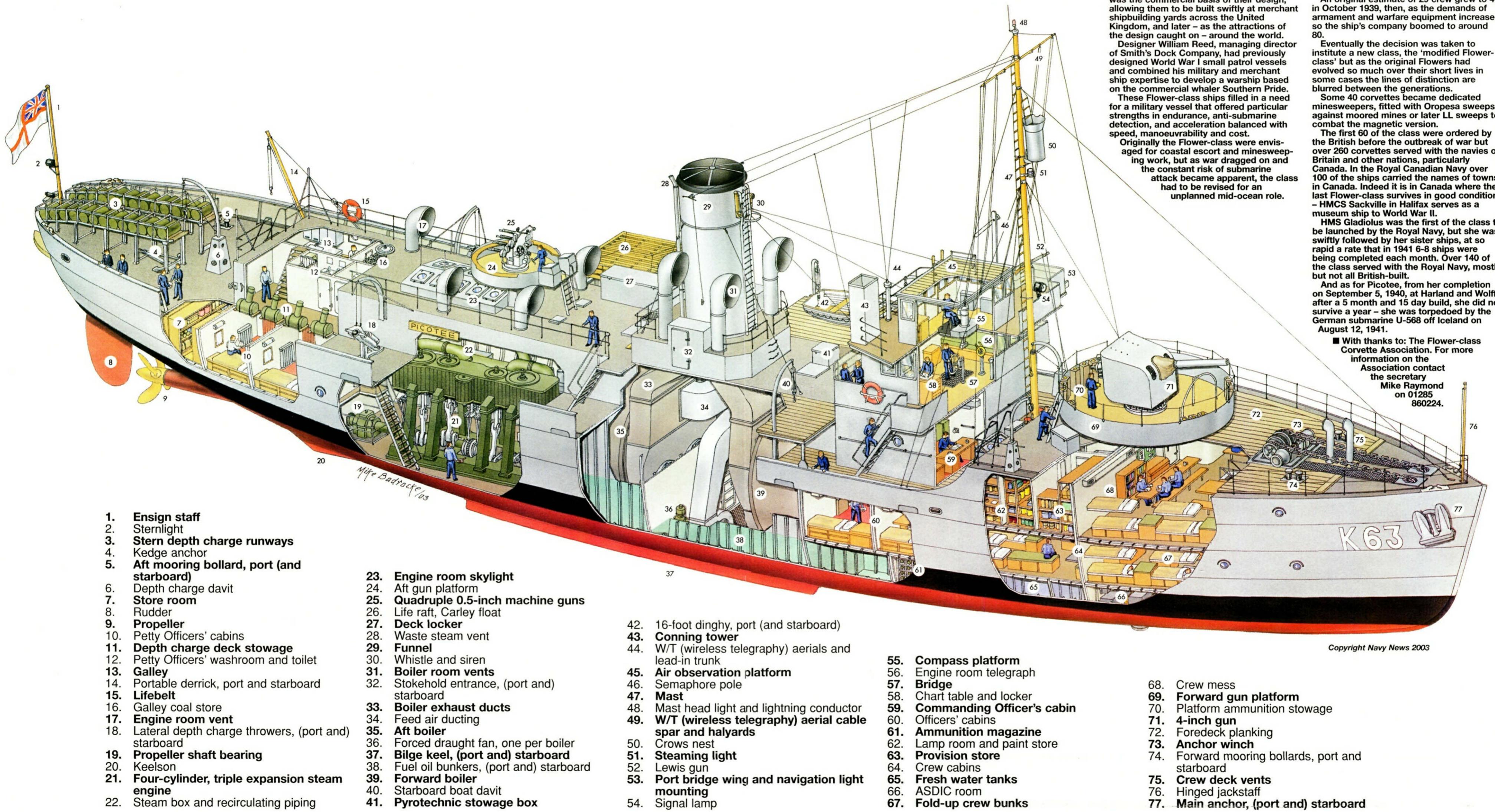
INSIDE THE FLOWER CLASS



Navy News

Flower-class corvette HMS Picottee, 1940–41

Stalwarts of World War II, the Flower-class corvettes served in all theatres of war but won particular attention for their part in the Battle of the Atlantic. These little ships proved their worth in a number of roles, principally as anti-submarine ships and convoy escorts.



The 1940-built HMS Picottee serves as a snapshot illustration of a class of warship that changed and developed throughout World War II.

The Flower-class corvettes started life known variously as Patrol Vessels, Whaler Type or Anti-Submarine Merchant (A/S-M) Patrol Vessels. One of their principal assets was the commercial basis of their design, allowing them to be built swiftly at merchant shipbuilding yards across the United Kingdom, and later – as the attractions of the design caught on – around the world.

Designer William Reed, managing director of Smith's Dock Company, had previously designed World War I small patrol vessels and combined his military and merchant ship expertise to develop a warship based on the commercial whaler Southern Pride. These Flower-class ships filled in a need for a military vessel that offered particular strengths in endurance, anti-submarine detection, and acceleration balanced with speed, manoeuvrability and cost.

Originally the Flower-class were envisaged for coastal escort and minesweeping work, but as war dragged on and the constant risk of submarine attack became apparent, the class had to be revised for an unplanned mid-ocean role.

Superstructure and armament were altered over the life of these ships, with successive builds ringing new changes in the class, and refits seeing older ships brought up to the latest innovations.

Everything from the forecastle deck and the flare of the bows to the finer details of the crewmen's quarters and bunks were altered.

An original estimate of 29 crew grew to 47 in October 1939, then, as the demands of armament and warfare equipment increased, so the ship's company boomed to around 80.

Eventually the decision was taken to institute a new class, the 'modified Flower-class' but as the original Flowers had evolved so much over their short lives in some cases the lines of distinction are blurred between the generations.

Some 40 corvettes became dedicated minesweepers, fitted with Oropesa sweeps against moored mines or later LL sweeps to combat the magnetic version.

The first 60 of the class were ordered by the British before the outbreak of war but over 260 corvettes served with the navies of Britain and other nations, particularly Canada. In the Royal Canadian Navy over 100 of the ships carried the names of towns in Canada. Indeed it is in Canada where the last Flower-class survives in good condition – HMCS Sackville in Halifax serves as a museum ship to World War II.

HMS Gladious was the first of the class to be launched by the Royal Navy, but she was swiftly followed by her sister ships, at so rapid a rate that in 1941 6-8 ships were being completed each month. Over 140 of the class served with the Royal Navy, mostly not all British-built.

And as for Picottee, from her completion on September 5, 1940, at Harland and Wolff after a 5 month and 15 day build, she did not survive a year – she was torpedoed by the German submarine U-568 off Iceland on August 12, 1941.

With thanks to: The Flower-class Corvette Association. For more information on the Association contact the secretary Mike Raymond on 01285 860224.

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